

Mr Colin Barnett; Dr Geoff Gallop; Chairman; Mr John Bradshaw; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr John Day

Division 3: Premier and Cabinet, \$87 682 000 -

Ms Guise, Chairman.

Dr Gallop, Premier.

Mr M.C. Wauchope, Director General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Dr R.A. Field, Acting Executive Director, Policy, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Mr G. Hay, Acting Assistant Director General, Public Sector Management, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Ms B. Robbins, Executive Director, Multicultural Interests, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Ms J.L. Sales, Acting Assistant Director General, Corporate and Business Services, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Mr BARNETT: Included amongst the Premier's titles is the portfolio of science, which is not included within division 3. Will the Premier be dealing with science during this division, or will another minister be dealing with it?

Dr GALLOP: I am the Minister for Science in the Government, and I have created the Premier's Science Council, which will provide me with advice on a range of issues related to science. The executive support for that body comes from the Department of Industry and Technology. There is some overlap there, but if members wish to ask questions related to the work of the Premier's Science Council, that would be perfectly appropriate. Questions relating to the Department of Industry and Technology, the support it gives to the Premier's Science Council, and some of the programs it administers which relate to science, would be more appropriately asked of the Minister for State Development, but I will be happy to make sure that he gets the questions if I cannot answer them.

Mr BARNETT: The word "science" does not appear in this section, apart from the heading. Does this mean that there is no allocation for science under the Premier's portfolios?

Dr GALLOP: There is an innovation fund, set up by the Government.

Mr BARNETT: It is not in division 3.

Dr GALLOP: As I said, the administration of some of the programs will be the responsibility of the Department of Industry and Technology. There is nothing abnormal about that.

Mr BARNETT: I ask the Chair, how is science to be dealt with, and who will respond?

Dr GALLOP: If the Leader of the Opposition wishes to ask questions, if I am in a position to answer them I will. If I cannot, I will refer them to my ministerial colleagues.

Mr BARNETT: I cannot ask questions if there is no item.

The CHAIRMAN: My understanding and ruling is that we are dealing only with the division, and the outputs before us. In this question it is division 3, outputs 1 to 7. Only matters related to those items in the budget can be referred to. If questions need to be put on another matter, then they need to be dealt with in that appropriate division, at another time. To answer the question of the Leader of the Opposition, the committee is dealing with division 3, outputs 1 to 7.

Mr BARNETT: I accept the decision of the Chair, since there is no alternative, but I request that the Chair, perhaps in consultation with the Speaker or the Clerk, in due course inform the committee as to who will respond on science, given that it is the Premier's portfolio.

The CHAIRMAN: I will take that course of action.

Mr BARNETT: Could the Premier please advise the current number of full-time equivalents within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet?

[10.10 am]

Dr GALLOP: The number of FTEs for the year 2001-02 will be 652.

Mr BARNETT: Page 75 refers to the Machinery of Government Taskforce. What is the current reduction and what will be the final reduction in FTEs across government as a result of the Machinery of Government Taskforce recommendations?

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Dr GALLOP: I have been asked that question by the shadow minister on a number of occasions. The answer is quite simple: the intention of the machinery of government changes is not to reduce the number of people in the public sector but to bring about a better public sector. As a consequence of the amalgamation of some functions, of course, fewer chief executive officers and managers will be required. As the Leader of the Opposition knows, we have started the process of reducing the number of senior executive staff. The Leader of the Opposition can keep asking the question, and I will keep responding by saying that the aim of the exercise was not to reduce the number of public servants but to bring about a better public service. We intend to reduce the number of senior executive staff positions to the tune of 60 during our term in government.

I will go through what has happened thus far. At the date of the election there were 422 senior executive staff. Our target is that the number must fall to 362 by 30 June 2003. There have been 33 management-initiated retirements following the offer made to senior executive staff in May 2001. These MIR payments cost \$4 138 438, and equivalent savings have been deducted from relevant agency budgets for 2001-02. Over the four-year term of the Government the savings will be \$16 343 609. Based on the 33 officers who have accepted MIR, the Government will have generated net savings of \$12 977 242 by 30 June 2005. A number of senior executive staff have left by other means, such as resignation and retirement. Those people are not included in the figures. If I may clarify the point, there are the savings of \$16 343 609, and the payments of \$4 138 438, resulting in a saving to government of \$12 977 242.

Mr BARNETT: I seek by way of supplementary information a list of all 60 SES positions to be abolished, whether they are currently occupied, whether they have an acting person in occupation, whether the position is abolished or has been filled on a temporary basis, and whether redundancy money has been paid out or will be paid out this year, and what it will amount to.

Dr GALLOP: We can provide information on those people who have left the service thus far. Of course, it is not possible to provide information on those who have not left because we do not yet know who they are.

Mr BARNETT: Madam Chair, the Premier has claimed a number of times that it will involve 60 positions. I request that those positions be identified.

Dr GALLOP: That is not an appropriate question.

Mr BARNETT: Why not?

Dr GALLOP: We could not have identified the 33 positions that have gone on the day we were elected, but 33 people have taken retirement since. The Government intends to achieve the target of the abolition of 60 positions.

Mr BARNETT: It is now eight months since the election.

Dr GALLOP: It is a four-year program.

Mr BARNETT: I ask for that supplementary information.

The CHAIRMAN: The Premier has indicated that it is not possible to make that available at this time.

Dr GALLOP: I am quite happy to provide the information on the 33 MIRs. That supplementary information will be provided.

Mr BRADSHAW: The Government has undertaken the establishment a new state logo, which would come under the purchase of outputs on page 75. Who decided to have a new logo? Will the current coat of arms be done away with? What has been the cost so far of producing the logo and checking out the legal aspects of it? What will be the cost to each department of changing over to the new logo?

Dr GALLOP: First, the aim of the exercise is not to produce a new coat of arms. I can assure the member that the Western Australian coat of arms remains. The Machinery of Government Taskforce put forward the view to the Government that it was important to have a more whole-of-government approach to the presentation of government in areas like government stationery. We have no problem with some agencies that have particular interests, such as government trading enterprises that are in a sense in the marketplace, having their own logo. We believe that common badging for departments is important to identify one Government of Western Australia. This was an important recommendation of the Machinery of Government Taskforce. I do not have its report in front of me, but if the member reads the report he will see the recommendation.

We have developed a new state logo using public sector resources. It is to be used on stationery, Internet publications and the new signage. Cabinet approved the common badging on 10 September 2001. It must be used by all departments in a co-badging arrangement by the majority of statutory authorities; in other words, if departments want to keep their own logo, they can have a co-badging arrangement. Commercial government

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enterprises are not required to use it. The State owns the copyright to the logo. It is proposed to protect its use through an Act of Parliament.

Agencies are required to exhaust stocks of existing stationery and only to change signs on a needs basis. The new logo will therefore be introduced on a cost-conscious basis. The cost of checking the logo is just under \$1 000. I am very pleased to report to the committee that, as a result of skills found within the public sector, we were able to find a designer. We asked him to help us out with the design of the logo. He provided those services to us. Likewise, all the resources for the first-class Premier's and Government's web sites were found within government. They were created on a very cost-efficient basis, unlike previously where some departments contracted out the task of creating their web sites, which was very expensive and used significant resources. I think I have answered the member's questions. The logo was a recommendation of the Machinery of Government Taskforce. The cost of checking the copyright was of the order of \$1 000. Resources to do the job were found from within existing government agencies.

Mr McGOWAN: The Machinery of Government Taskforce was obviously a major achievement of the new Government. What problems were identified in the way that government was constructed across agencies which led to the creation of the Machinery of Government Taskforce? How did the number of agencies and so forth and the government structure of Western Australia compare with those of other States? What is the ongoing process of the task force now that it has reported and its recommendations have been put into effect?

[10.20 am]

Dr GALLOP: I will speak generally about the first part of the member's question, as most of the material is already in the public arena. The then Opposition and now Government has been of the view for some time that the Western Australian system of government needed fundamental overhaul. During the election it was proposed that the number of government departments would be reduced. In order to achieve that, a task force was established. The reasons for the reduction of the number of government departments come under a number of different headings. In order to bring about easier access to government services, it is important that there not be too much complexity or overlap. It was a particular problem for investors who wanted to come to Western Australia. An obvious achievement has been to bring together the major economic agencies. Modern government requires intragovernmental cooperation. Government agencies need to work together to solve problems, and if there are too many agencies, it is difficult to do that. It was important to reduce the number of departments so there could be a better approach to the delivery of government services and the development of government policy. They were the basic reasons for initiating the task force review.

There was no doubt that Western Australia was out of step with the other States. Western Australia had 43 government departments. Victoria has only six; Tasmania has reduced its number; New South Wales is in the range of 20 to 30 departments and Queensland has 18 or 19. There is no doubt that this was an issue that needed to be addressed. Despite a number of reports to the previous Government, it did not look into the matter.

I will summarise what has happened, as it is of interest to the Chamber. On 26 February 2001, Cabinet approved the establishment of the task force. It completed its deliberations and submitted its findings to the Government in mid-June to enable major structural change to commence from 1 July 2001. It was a quick process and the Government wanted things set up and running as quickly as possible. The foundations for the implementation of the 55 recommendations are now in place. There have been changes in department names and status. The following machinery changes have taken place in line with the task force's recommendations. Seven new departments were created with effect from 1 July 2001. The Department of Consumer and Employment Protection was created by an amalgamation of the Ministry of Fair Trading, the Department of Productivity and Labour Relations and WorkSafe Western Australia. The Department of Housing and Works was created by transferring staff from the Department of Contract and Management Services and retitling the Ministry of Housing. The Department of Industry and Technology was created by transferring staff from the Department of Contract and Management Services and retitling the Department of Commerce and Trade. The Department of Local Government and Regional Development was created by transferring staff from the Department of Commerce and Trade and retitling the Department of Local Government. The Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources was created by transferring staff from the Department of Resources Development and retitling the Department of Minerals and Energy. The Department for Planning and Infrastructure was created from staff transferred from the Ministry for Planning and part of the Department of Transport. The Department of Treasury and Finance was created by transferring staff from the State Revenue Department and retitling the Treasury. In addition, there are 12 departments with new names: the Department of Agriculture, the Department for Community Development, the Department of Culture and the Arts, the Department of Education, the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Health, the Department of Indigenous Affairs, the Department of Justice, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor, the Department of Sport and Recreation and the Department of Training. They are all now designated as

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departments of state and have director generals. There are six departments that are yet to change, but change is contemplated in the future. The departments are still in place and have chief executive officers. I am referring to the Department of Land Administration, the Department of Transport, the Office of Energy, the Department of Conservation and Land Management, the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Education Services. In order for those departments to be changed, they will require legislation to be introduced.

It is interesting that, in Western Australia, a lot of departments have been legislated, unlike the Commonwealth or many of the other States, where a Government can change the departmental structure through an executive decree. Western Australia is constrained by a significant amount of legislation, particularly in the area of transport, where it is hard to make changes.

Mr JOHNSON: The Government will have difficulties in transport because of the minister.

Dr GALLOP: The issue in transport is due to efforts over many years of the member's National Party colleagues to incorporate some of their views into the legislation affecting the department. It has nothing to do with the Government's problems with the minister.

Seven entities that have had their departmental status removed are the Government Employees Superannuation Board, the Workers Compensation and Rehabilitation Commission, the Gascoyne Development Commission, the Kimberley Development Commission, the Peel Development Commission, the Pilbara Development Commission and the Wheatbelt Development Commission. Those entities now rely upon statute and they are no longer departments. They are now statutory bodies. The task force recommended that a new type of entity, an administrative office, be created to replace the departmental status of a number of agencies. Amendments need to be made to the Public Sector Management Act to allow that to occur. Accordingly, the following six administrative offices have not lost their departmental status, but it is intended to be done through legislation: the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services -

Mr BARNETT: Point of order! The information being read out by the Premier is public information. This is an estimates committee, which is the opportunity for members to scrutinise the budget. I request that the Premier respond briefly to actual questions, rather than make statements.

Mr JOHNSON: At the start of the proceedings, the Chairman asked that questions and answers be concise. We have had about 10 minutes of diatribe that we could have read anywhere.

The CHAIRMAN: It was a lengthy question.

Mr McGOWAN: All members are listening to these questions and answers. Estimates hearings are not just an opportunity for the Opposition; they are an opportunity for government backbenchers to ask significant questions. I expect the Premier to be allowed to complete his answer.

Dr GALLOP: When I finish this particular part of my answer, the member for Rockingham should ask me another question so I can complete the answer if the Opposition thinks I am speaking for too long. This is a complex area and I am trying to report to the Chamber the progress that has been made. The report is new. It is all new information.

The CHAIRMAN: I have a point of order before me. Questions and answers should be succinct. I am aware that the question was in several parts. I ask the Premier to address each of them so the committee can move on.

Dr GALLOP: There are six proposed administrative offices that have not yet lost their departmental status. It is intended to create administrative offices, as recommended by the Machinery of Government Taskforce. They are the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services, the Office of the Public Sector Standards Commissioner, the Office of the Auditor General, the Department of the Registrar, Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission, and the Electoral Commission. The Governor has approved an order under the Alteration of Statutory Designations Act to change all references in legislation for new departmental names. The Government has made a significant amount of progress. The member should ask me what legislation is required to complete the changes. I would like to give those details now but the Opposition does not want me to.

Several members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, members! The member for Murray-Wellington has a point of order.

Mr BRADSHAW: The Premier is not supposed to be asking questions or giving directions.

Dr GALLOP: I have not completed the answer to the original question.

Mr BARNETT: It is a dorothy dixer! Why not employ a runner to take the questions to the member?

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The CHAIRMAN: I have a point of order before me. I ask the Premier to answer the questions before him so the committee can proceed.

Dr GALLOP: I have not had the chance to fully answer the question.

Mr McGOWAN: I want to ask a supplementary question. The Opposition is asking supplementary questions and I expect the same courtesy.

The CHAIRMAN: I have allowed supplementary questions and I will do so now. Make it succinct.

Mr McGOWAN: I am interested in the legislative changes needed to enact the reforms.

Dr GALLOP: It is an important issue for the Parliament. A machinery of government miscellaneous amendments Bill is proposed to deal with amendments to various Acts that refer to names of departments and particular positions. The amendments will reflect new titles and ensure that future changes to titles can be affected without the need for further legislation. Work on the amendments has commenced with parliamentary counsel. Proposals to amend the Public Sector Management Act are being developed. The Regional Development Commissions Act has been amended to allow the commissions to be accountable to different portfolio ministers. A taxation administration Bill is proposed to provide for the communication of taxpayer information between the Office of State Revenue and other officers in the Department of Treasury and Finance.

Amendments to the Environmental Protection Act are proposed to encompass the roles of the proposed departments of conservation, environment, water and catchment protection, and the catchment, water and environmental commission. Cabinet has already approved the drafting of amendments to establish the Western Australian transit authority, which involves the amalgamation of rail and bus public transport functions in order to separate road safety from licensing functions under the Road Traffic Act and to facilitate the transfer of licensing regulatory functions to the Department for Planning and Infrastructure and the consequent abolition of the Department of Transport. In the longer run, it is expected that legislation will be drafted for the establishment of an economic regulator. That legislation will deal with changes to statutory authorities as a result of the announced intention to review all statutory authorities. Although that review has commenced, it is difficult to give a full description of it. However, the Government will examine all statutory authorities throughout the State to consider whether they are needed. If statutory authorities are needed, the Government will examine what form they will take, and how they should operate.

[10.30 am]

Mr BARNETT: I refer to Machinery of Government Taskforce recommendations. Will the Premier advise what measures have been taken to accommodate the widespread confusion in the transport portfolios following the Premier's decision to transfer road safety responsibility from the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure to the Minister for Police? When will the necessary legislation be introduced into Parliament? What has been the cost of preparing that legislation? What resources have been allocated to that issue?

Dr GALLOP: The Government is implementing the Machinery of Government Taskforce recommendations.

Mr BARNETT: No, the Government made the decision before the Machinery of Government Taskforce reported - be honest.

Dr GALLOP: The Leader of the Opposition is mixing up the issues.

Mr BARNETT: The Premier made the decision to transfer road safety responsibility from the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure to the Minister for Police at my behest before the Machinery of Government Taskforce reported. That is a historic fact.

Dr GALLOP: The issue has been dealt with because the Minister for Police became the minister for road safety. That matter was dealt with through the change in ministerial portfolios

Mr BARNETT: Did that change require legislation?

Dr GALLOP: No, it did not. The Minister for Police is the minister for road safety.

Mr BARNETT: There is widespread confusion within the Department of Transport. If the Premier talked to some people in the industry, he would be aware of that. No one knows who is responsible for what. Even the two ministers in the Chamber look to each other to see who should answer questions.

Dr GALLOP: The Minister Assisting the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure is the minister for road safety. The legislation that has been necessary to provide her with that job has been transferred to her portfolio; there is no question about that. The Government must deal with the issue of transport. It must decide what to do with the legislation generally, as recommended by the Machinery of Government Taskforce. The Minister Assisting

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the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure is the minister for road safety; the Governor designated that responsibility.

Mr BARNETT: Will no legislative changes be made to road safety?

Dr GALLOP: The current situation could prevail. We want to create a new department of planning and infrastructure.

Mr BARNETT: Why has the Premier made road safety the responsibility of another minister?

Dr GALLOP: We made that decision in the course of a debate about the driving record of the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure.

Mr BARNETT: Is the Premier saying that no legislation is required to effect that change?

Dr GALLOP: It has been done; the Governor assented to it.

Mr BARNETT: Is any legislation forthcoming?

Dr GALLOP: Legislation will be forthcoming to create the new department for planning and infrastructure, as was recommended by the Machinery of Government Taskforce. Why is the Leader of the Opposition confused?

Mr BARNETT: I am not confused; however, the Premier knows that there is absolute confusion within the transport portfolio.

Dr GALLOP: The Government will create a new department for planning and infrastructure that involves planning, land administration and transport functions. That is a complicated matter. The Minister Assisting the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure is the minister for road safety; that has been done, and the Governor signed off on it. There is no confusion.

Mr BARNETT: There is.

Dr GALLOP: You think there is, but there is not.

Mr BARNETT: I refer now to output 2, which relates to ministerial offices -

The CHAIRMAN (Mr McRae): Before you do that, the member for Murray-Wellington indicated that he wanted to deal with the current output.

Mr BRADSHAW: No, I do not.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions about that output?

Mr BARNETT: We will probably come back to it.

The CHAIRMAN: We cannot go backwards.

Mr BARNETT: Yes, we can. We are not changing divisions.

The CHAIRMAN: The member is right, we can come back to the output.

Mr BARNETT: I refer to output 2 -

Mr D'ORAZIO: Point of order. Is there a chance that some government members can ask a question?

Several members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr BARNETT: I refer to output 2 that relates to management of matters of State, which includes the funding of ministerial offices.

Dr GALLOP: Which page of the budget estimates?

Mr BARNETT: I have some general questions about the figures for ministerial offices that are outlined at pages 80 and 81 of the budget estimates. Is there a separate budget allocation for each ministerial office?

Dr GALLOP: Yes.

Mr BARNETT: Therefore, by way of supplementary information, I seek a list of the budget allocations for each ministerial office. Is there a budget allocation for the office of the Leader of the Opposition? If so, what is that allocation?

Mr WAUCHOPE: As members of Parliament will be aware, we have moved to accrual appropriations. I have accrual figures for the budget of the Leader of the Opposition; therefore, the cash component is less than that amount. The budget for the first party in opposition is \$815 370, and the budget for the second party in

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opposition is \$437 686. I do not have the budgets for ministerial offices with me, but it can be provided by way of supplementary information.

Dr GALLOP: I confirm that the allocations to the ministerial offices will be provided by way of supplementary information.

Mr BARNETT: I ask that a list of the staff numbers in each ministerial office be provided. Which, if any, of those staff members have been seconded from elsewhere in government? Are their salaries paid out of the ministerial budget, or are they paid directly by the department or agency from which they have been seconded?

Dr GALLOP: That information is not available immediately. However, we are happy to provide that information by way of supplementary information. I will refer to the general issue of ministerial offices. Under the previous government, 210 personnel were attached to ministerial offices, including the Premier's office. Under the current Government, 161 people are attached to ministerial offices. In other words, the Government has reduced the number of ministerial staff, which will provide savings to the Government. Those savings will be spent on providing core services in Western Australia.

The savings generated from those reductions in ministerial staff total about \$3.5 million per annum. That includes the reduction in the size of Cabinet from 17 ministers to 14 ministers. By reducing the ministry and reducing the number of staff in ministerial offices, we have produced a saving of \$3.5 million. That \$3.5 million multiplied by four years equals some \$14 million. That \$14 million will be made available for core service delivery under this Government that was not available under the former Government.

Mr BARNETT: The Premier should just provide the information; we will decide whether he deserves praise.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The estimates are not a forum for debate.

Mr BRADSHAW: At page 76 of the budget estimates, under significant issues and trends, is the statement -

The trend towards direct funding of community organisations by the Commonwealth Government has led to expectations that State Government will match Commonwealth funding.

Has this led to greater demands being made on the Government? How does this fit in with government policy? Under those circumstances, how much money is the Government expected to contribute in this financial year?

[10.40 am]

Dr GALLOP: The member has raised an interesting issue. The trend towards direct funding of community organisations by the Commonwealth has led to the expectation that the State will match that commonwealth funding. Examples include the commonwealth funding under the Natural Heritage Trust, the national action plan for salinity and water quality, the greenhouse gas abatement program and youth action pathways. This trend is likely to increase the demands on the State. In response to this, we are trying to ensure that commitments are not given without a proper funding plan in place. Obviously, we are urging the Commonwealth Government to try to reduce the number of occasions on which it makes grand commitments and then expects the State to come in behind it, because we have our own budget to manage. We do not have a specific figure on that. However, it is an issue and the member is right to raise it.

Recently, we agreed on a protocol within government to deal with these intergovernmental issues in a way that does not put pressure on the state budget without any proper planning. In the past, ministers have been caught at meetings at which the ministerial councils have signed up on something and no-one back at home base knows about it, but a commitment has been entered into. We have a proper protocol so that if any decision like that is made, it is properly funded and put into the forward estimates. As the member knows, we inherited some unfunded commitments.

Mr D'ORAZIO: The second dot point of the significant issues and trends on page 76 refers to the Government's crime prevention strategy. There are two budget allocations of \$125 000 and \$698 000 for crime prevention projects. Can the Premier advise what will be achieved by these programs?

Dr GALLOP: I am pleased to refer the committee to the bipartisan report of the parliamentary Select Committee on Crime Prevention, which recommended the establishment of an Office of Crime Prevention. We took up that particular recommendation, put it into our election platform and, as a result of a recent decision, we can announce that we are creating the Office of Crime Prevention. Indeed, I announced that two Sundays ago. The responsibilities of the office will be to develop a whole-of-government crime prevention strategy; to coordinate the operational aspects of the strategy; to support and assist the existing bodies, such as Safer WA; to provide policy advice to the Government; and to research and produce information on crime prevention safety and statistics. We have allocated \$5 million to establish the office, some of which is new money. The Government

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has made an extra commitment to the Office of Crime Prevention. One of the major policy decisions on page 76 indicates that the money has been allocated to the office. We are consolidating existing crime prevention programs and are putting more money into the office so we can come up with a comprehensive strategy.

I know the member for Ballajura has played a very big role in this area in his previous incarnation as the Mayor of the City of Bayswater. He knows that crime is very costly. In monetary terms, it costs Australia \$18 billion a year, which is about \$1 000 for every man, woman and child. It is not enough to deal with just the consequences of crime; we must get in early and look at the causes. The Office of Crime Prevention will provide us with a lot of strategic assistance to do that. Funds will be available for it to enter into partnerships with local government and local communities to bring about a reduction in crime in our community. This is as an important priority of the Government. We have delivered on the select committee report. We have delivered on the election promise to put more money into crime prevention. The member will see delivery coming through in the policies of that office. We intend to head that office with a person who has the ability and the strategic capacity to put together some good advice.

Mr D'ORAZIO: Will this committee have some direct input into local government, maybe in a coordination-type role, in relation to some of the projects it is undertaking?

Dr GALLOP: I will distinguish between three things: the Office of Crime Prevention; the various funds that are available for access by groups outside the State Government; and the subcommittee of the Cabinet, which has an overall policy-making function within government. The Office of Crime Prevention, which is in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, will provide support to the subcommittee of the Cabinet. I will go through the funding pool that is in place. Various funds are available for crime prevention initiatives and have been allocated in the budget. The member would be aware that funds are available for the community security programs, the state crime prevention strategy, community policing and Safer WA. We are looking to the community outside of the State Government to put forward proposals on how to spend that money. Since becoming Premier, I have announced some very important initiatives in that area.

Mr BARNETT: Essentially, it is re-badging existing programs.

Dr GALLOP: Some of them are, yes. Safer WA was in place under the previous Government. However, what the previous Government did not do, and what it refused to do, was set up the Office of Crime Prevention. It did not spend as much money on this initiative as we will.

Mr BARNETT: How many staff are in the office?

Mr D'ORAZIO: Before the Leader of the Opposition asks more questions, there is a need for some coordination in relation to some of these initiatives. I hope this office coordinates the various responses, including Safer WA, security patrols and the other initiatives. It is important that it have a coordinating role. This is a great initiative.

Dr GALLOP: There are 13 full-time equivalents attached to crime prevention within government.

Mr BARNETT: How many people exist now?

Dr GALLOP: There are 13 FTEs.

Mr BARNETT: There are 13 FTEs?

Dr GALLOP: That includes two contract positions that expire in January 2002.

Ms QUIRK: I refer the Premier to the major policy decisions on page 76. A figure of \$159 000 is allocated for online WA multicultural communities. Can the Premier explain what that project entails?

Dr GALLOP: The online WA multicultural communities project provides support and facilities for community groups to establish their own web sites at a low cost. Members have access to their own webpages, chat room, bulletin board, calendar events and mail list. The online project has been developed in partnership with the Ethnic Communities Council of WA. Its aim is to establish a vibrant multicultural network on the Internet. The project was officially launched in 2000 by my colleague the member for Hillarys, with 50 communities connected to the network. Approximately 70 groups have been trained on how the network operates. It has proved to be an effective communications tool for multicultural communities, with use of the site's facilities increasing. Presentations of the network and demonstrations of its facilities have been conducted at a number of conferences and workshops, and directly for other government agencies. Based on the success of the first phase of the project, work commenced on the second phase in May 2001. This will extend membership of the network to all incorporated ethnic communities, service organisations and nonprofit community organisations across WA and has the potential to bring an additional 450 groups online. An amount of \$50 000 was budgeted in 2000-01. However, delays in the tendering process resulted in those funds being carried over to 2001-02. As part of the budget process, a further \$159 000 was allocated to the project for 2001-02. That is a total of \$382 000 over the

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following three years. It is a good program, which was initiated by the previous Government and which has been carried on by this Government. We are giving it the support it needs to carry it through to its full completion.

Mrs EDWARDES: I refer to page 95. The FTE figure under paragraph (a) at the bottom of the statement of financial performance is clearly wrong.

Dr GALLOP: It is.

Mrs EDWARDES: It does not take into account output 2, the management of matters of state, and paragraph (a) on page 81.

[10.50 am]

Dr GALLOP: Those figures are wrong. The correct figures are 660 and 652 respectively.

Mrs EDWARDES: That does not add up. The full-time equivalents in the entire report add up to 657 for 2000-01 and 647 for 2001-02.

Dr GALLOP: I am happy to check out those figures, but that is the advice I have been given.

Mrs EDWARDES: There is obviously a reduction in salaries and allowances of approximately \$6 million. The reduction in staff, according to the Premier's figure, is eight. How is that reduction of salaries and allowances made up?

Dr GALLOP: It includes all termination payments that were made for the term-of-government appointments.

Mrs EDWARDES: I again ask for a further breakdown of how that was achieved, by way of supplementary information.

The CHAIRMAN: Can the member clarify precisely what she wants by way of supplementary information?

Mrs EDWARDES: What is the reduction of \$6 million in salaries and allowances for and what is the reduction of 10 FTEs referred to on page 95 for the term-of-government appointments redundancies to which the Premier has just responded?

Dr GALLOP: I am at a loss to know exactly what the member wants.

Mrs EDWARDES: These are awfully highly paid public servants if there is a reduction of eight and \$6 million difference between last year's salaries and allowances figure and this year's salaries and allowances figure. Will the Premier please provide the information?

Dr GALLOP: I said that there was a one-off payment that had to be made to the term-of-government people who worked for the previous Government. That is what happens when there is a change of Government.

Mrs EDWARDES: Will the Premier break down those figures or does he have them with him?

Dr GALLOP: I have them with me somewhere. I shall read out the information I have been given. The expenses were associated with the change of Government following the state election. They were primarily the cost of severances that occurred with the term-of-government appointments. Post-election severances of \$6 574 574 were paid out prior to 30 June 2001. A further \$100 000 in severance payments were deferred to 2001-02. The severances were: output 1, \$758 101; output 2, \$3 982 662 in ministerial offices and \$690 409 in electorate offices; output 3, \$173 461; output 4, \$565 000; output 8, \$175 154; and other, \$229 787.

Mrs EDWARDES: I ask one follow-up question about those redundancy payments. Can the Premier identify an inconsistency that appears across the board? Paragraph (c) on page 83 deals with the quantity of redundancies. I want to know how those redundancies were dealt with. An answer to a question on notice stated that the cost of management-initiated retirement packages will be met by individual agencies and if an agency is unable to meet the cost of an employee's exit, central funding may be considered. Another answer to a question on notice indicated that agencies are required to fund voluntary severance payments of management-initiated retirement packages within their existing budget allocations. Another answer to a question on notice stated that approval of a management-initiated retirement package by the Government is dependent on a fully funded position at an equivalent level being returned to Treasury. I believe the last response is the Government's policy; that is, when a retirement package is not fulfilled, the money must be returned to Treasury. However, there appears to be an inconsistency across the board.

Dr GALLOP: There are MIR packages, with specific programs with specific timetables. Voluntary severances do occur within government, as the member knows; her Government set up a process that allowed that to happen. The distinction is between the specific program for management-initiated redundancies and general severances that occur from time to time.

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Mrs EDWARDES: Does the money for severance payments return to Treasury under MIR packages but it remains in an agency for voluntary severances, which are funded from that agency?

Dr GALLOP: I have answered that question.

Mrs EDWARDES: Will central funding be made available to individual agencies when they request it?

Dr GALLOP: The forward estimates of those departments are adjusted because of the savings that will flow through and they will fund them from their own operations. However, they will have savings down the track, as the member knows, because they will have fewer people at the top. The Department for Community Development received extra funding, the details of which I do not know but I am happy to follow up.

Mr JOHNSON: Prior to the election the Premier said many things and gave a lot of publicity to how important the Office of Citizenship and Multicultural Interests was as a portfolio area and that he would take direct responsibility for it. Can the Premier tell me why, on output 7 on page 89 -

Dr GALLOP: Excuse me for a second. I am sorry, I just wanted to raise something with a member.

Mr JOHNSON: Could the Premier not do that afterwards? This is the budget estimates hearing.

Dr GALLOP: No, I just wanted to do it.

Mr JOHNSON: This is the Opposition's opportunity to try to keep you accountable.

Dr GALLOP: Come on!

Mr JOHNSON: It is a pretty hard job.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the member for Hillarys to please ask his question.

Mr JOHNSON: I wanted to, Mr Chairman, but the Premier wanted to have a private discussion with one of his members. He was probably sorting out the next dorothy.

Prior to the election, the Premier made a big thing about how important was the portfolio of citizenship and multicultural interests.

Dr GALLOP: That is right.

Mr JOHNSON: The Premier said that if Labor were elected he would take the portfolio under his personal direction in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Dr GALLOP: We have.

Mr JOHNSON: I realise you have. Why, in output 7, has the budget for multicultural issues been cut by about 20 per cent? Secondly, can the Premier tell me by way of supplementary information - because he will not know off the top of his head - how many invitations he has received from multicultural groups since he became Premier, how many he has attended and how many he has sent representatives to? I have attended a few multicultural functions and have not seen the Premier.

Dr GALLOP: I shall refer to a range of issues raised by the member. First, the member referred to the Government's overall approach to citizenship and multicultural interests; secondly, he raised the question of the budget for those areas; and, thirdly, he raised the question of my attendance at functions.

Mr JOHNSON: And your commitment to the portfolio.

Dr GALLOP: I shall start with the last question first. If there is a member of this Parliament whose commitment to attending community functions is well ahead of the historical pattern that existed in Western Australia, you are looking at him. I take great pride in the fact that I attend as many multicultural functions as I can. I could show the member my diary for the weekend, if he wants to know how many different functions I attended. However, I believe that is a silly question.

Mr JOHNSON: The question relates to the particular portfolio area that the Premier said was so important. Why does he send so many representatives to represent him rather than attend himself?

Dr GALLOP: Does the member want to come to my office and look at the number of appointments that I am requested to make?

Mr JOHNSON: What I said before the election is what I say now: this portfolio is an important one and should have a dedicated minister allocated to it. The Premier should give the portfolio to a minister who will spend the time and effort attending these multicultural functions.

Dr GALLOP: My parliamentary secretary - the member for Rockingham - assists me in this area, because it has always been assumed that the Premier's functions are such that he will be unable to attend all these functions.

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The member for Rockingham has been a very able assistant to me in this area in ensuring that I get advice about what is going on.

[11.00 am]

Mr JOHNSON: I have not seen him at too many of them.

Dr GALLOP: I think it is a very silly question.

Mr JOHNSON: That is because it is embarrassing you.

Dr GALLOP: It does not embarrass me.

Mr JOHNSON: The Premier cannot attend those functions or pay the correct degree of attention that he should to those important multicultural groups and their invitations. He should attend them. If not, he should give the portfolio to a dedicated minister who will attend those events. Will the Premier answer the question? I have asked the Premier to give me, by way of supplementary information -

The CHAIRMAN (Mr McRae): Order, member for Hillarys! If the member for Hillarys directed his questions without adding a whole lot of editorial, we might be able to get the answers that he is trying to elicit.

Mr JOHNSON: Okay. I have already asked the Premier whether he will provide, by way of supplementary information, details of the number of functions he has been invited to, the number he has personally attended and the number to which he has sent representatives. Will the Premier answer the other question -

Dr GALLOP: If you want me to do work in my public service, I am happy to do it, but it is a silly question and the member knows it.

Mr JOHNSON: No, I do not. I want people to know the Premier's true commitment to that portfolio area and the hypocrisy behind that commitment.

Dr GALLOP: Come on! That is coming from the member who was doing a dirty deal with One Nation. He can talk about multiculturalism!

Mr JOHNSON: Yes, I can talk about it. The Premier is misleading this estimates committee. I have never done a deal with One Nation.

Dr GALLOP: Have you not?

Mr JOHNSON: No, I have never done a deal. The Premier should back up what he is saying. He should tell people the truth. He should come forward with any evidence whatsoever -

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr JOHNSON: I have asked the Premier a question about output 7 on page 89 of the *Budget Statements*. Why is there a 20 per cent cut in the multicultural -

Dr GALLOP: I will answer the two questions.

Mr JOHNSON: Will the Premier supply the requested supplementary information?

Dr GALLOP: What does the member want?

Mr JOHNSON: I have already asked for it about five times.

Dr GALLOP: No, you have not. What is your question?

Mr JOHNSON: I would like, by way of supplementary information, details of the number of invitations the Premier has received for multicultural functions, how many -

Mr McGowan interjected.

Mr JOHNSON: The member for Rockingham should be quiet. He asked a dorothy dixer that took about half an hour.

The CHAIRMAN: Order. Member for Hillarys, you have added supplementary question upon supplementary question.

Mr JOHNSON: No, I have not. It is the same question, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I will defer to the Premier. He should go through the first three questions that you asked.

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Dr GALLOP: Can I ask a question? I will provide that information if the Opposition will provide me with details of the number of invitations the Leader of the Opposition has received to the same events and the number he has attended. Is that okay?

Mr JOHNSON: It is not his portfolio, it is mine.

Dr GALLOP: I see.

Mr JOHNSON: I will tell you how many I have attended. You are the Premier.

Dr GALLOP: I think it is a fair go.

Mr JOHNSON: He is embarrassed, because he has not attended many.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Dr GALLOP: I will provide the information, but will you provide the information on the number of functions attended by the Leader of the Opposition?

Mr BARNETT: I went to the Italian Ball on Saturday night. I did not see the Premier there.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, members!

Dr GALLOP: This is ridiculous.

Mr JOHNSON: The Opposition has a dedicated shadow minister for multicultural affairs, who takes his portfolio seriously. He is dedicated in more ways than one. I am grateful to the Premier for agreeing to provide the supplementary information I requested. I think it is quite interesting -

Dr GALLOP: Will the Leader of the Opposition provide that information?

Mr JOHNSON: It is nothing to do with him. We are asking you the questions.

Dr GALLOP: Yes it is. He is spending public money, as I am.

Mr JOHNSON: This is about keeping the executive accountable. I have really hit a raw nerve here.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, member for Hillarys! What is your supplementary question?

Mr JOHNSON: The Chairman and the government members are trying to protect the Premier. I have asked about six times -

The CHAIRMAN: I am asking the member to come to the point and to ask his supplementary question.

Mr JOHNSON: As the Premier and the Chairman obviously do not understand what my question is, I will ask it for the tenth time: will the Premier provide, by way of supplementary information, details of the number of invitations the Premier has received from multicultural groups and associations, how many he has personally attended, how many he has sent representatives to and how many that no-one has been able to attend? That is the supplementary information I am seeking. I know that the Premier will not know the answer off the top of his head. My other question was about output 7 on page 89 concerning multicultural issues. There is an approximate cut in funding of 20 per cent.

The CHAIRMAN: Before the Premier responds, I point out that invitations to events do not form part of the estimates process. I ask the member for Hillarys to draw his attention and questions -

Mr JOHNSON: Of course it is. There is a monetary value involved in the Premier attending -

The CHAIRMAN: I rule the question out of order. The Premier can address himself to the second question.

Mr JOHNSON: You really are protecting the Premier! If you are frightened -

Dr GALLOP: I am happy to provide the member with the list of functions that I attend.

Mr JOHNSON: Together with the ones to which you have been invited?

Dr GALLOP: Do you know the amount of work that that will require?

Mr JOHNSON: I said at the time that you did not have the time to do it, but you would not listen.

Dr GALLOP: Would the Leader of the Opposition be willing to do that work?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I call the member for Rockingham.

Dr GALLOP: No, I have not finished answering the member for Hillarys' question.

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The CHAIRMAN: This has descended to the point at which there is no answer. The question is not leading anywhere. I call the member for Rockingham.

Mr JOHNSON: That is a disgraceful attitude to take, Mr Chairman. I asked a serious question about output 7 on page 89.

The CHAIRMAN: I call the member for Hillarys to order.

Mr JOHNSON: This is not the House, this is the budget estimates committee.

The CHAIRMAN: It operates under the same standing orders.

Mr JOHNSON: No. I will ask the Speaker to take over the Chair, because your behaviour at the moment in protecting the Premier is disgraceful.

Dr GALLOP: No, I am happy to answer the question.

Mr JOHNSON: The Chairman will not let you now.

Dr GALLOP: He is in charge; I am not.

The CHAIRMAN: If the member can rephrase his question, I will put him on the call list and he can ask it in a moment.

Mr JOHNSON: I will get the same non-answer.

Mr McGOWAN: Excellent decision. My question relates to page -

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr McGOWAN: I can always give you all mine if you want, and we can compare how many you attend with how many I attend. We will do a little comparison, my friend.

My question relates to output 2 on page 79, which refers to management of matters of State. My question relates to the Government's decision to reduce the number of ministers. I am interested to know the reduction that this change has made in the number of staff employed in ministerial offices and in expenditure on offices and ancillary items such as motor vehicles and the like. I would like to know the saving that has been made as a result of this reduction. I am also interested to know how it compares with expenditure by the leaders of the opposition parties. Did a reduction in the staffing levels of the opposition parties also occur upon the ascension of the Gallop Government to power?

Dr GALLOP: The number of staff employed in ministerial offices, including the Premier's office, on 9 February 2001, which was immediately prior to the state election, was 210. This compares with the 161 staff who were employed as of 30 August 2001 - a reduction of 49 staff members. The reduction in the number of ministerial offices will provide an annual saving of about \$3.5 million. There has been no reduction in the number of staff allocated to the offices of the leaders of the Opposition. That number remains at 16.

Mr BARNETT: The Premier is not telling the truth. He is misleading Parliament. What is this reference to the "leaders" of the Opposition? There is only one Opposition and the Premier knows it. He has misled this Parliament.

Dr GALLOP: I have not.

Mr BARNETT: He has. He has misled this Parliament.

Dr GALLOP: I said "leaders".

Mr BARNETT: No, there are no "Leaders of the Opposition".

Dr GALLOP: There is a Leader of the National Party.

Mr BARNETT: There is a Leader of the Opposition. The Premier should consult the Constitution.

Dr GALLOP: There is a second opposition party.

Mr BARNETT: There is one Opposition. The Premier is misleading this Parliament.

Dr GALLOP: I am not misleading the Parliament.

Mr BARNETT: I ask for a point of order. The Premier is misleading this Parliament. There is one opposition position. The member for Rockingham quite properly asked for details of staff numbers provided to the Opposition both now and at the time of the previous Government.

Dr GALLOP: The Leader of the Opposition should take that up with the Leader of the National Party.

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Mr BARNETT: Let us provide it in writing. The Premier should tell the truth for a change.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Rockingham has a supplementary question.

Mr McGOWAN: My question was to the Premier and concerned the reduction in the number of staff employed in ministerial offices. He answered that there was a reduction of 49. I then asked whether there had been a consequent reduction in the number of staff employed by the offices of the Opposition parties. His answer was that there had not been any reduction in staffing levels to the offices of the opposition parties. Has the Premier received any requests from any leader of the opposition parties to increase the level of staffing at those offices?

Dr GALLOP: As I recall, the first press release by the Leader of the Opposition requested an increase in staff for his office. What he forgets is that there is another opposition party, called the National Party.

Mr BARNETT: Which is not in coalition.

Dr GALLOP: I see, but it is an opposition party. It sits on the opposition side.

Mr BARNETT: The Premier made that decision without any consultation with me, as Leader of the Opposition. It was the most arrogant act of a Premier. There was no consultation and it was a dubious decision. The Premier knows it. The decision was entirely political and was made with no semblance of respect for proper conduct in government. It was an entirely political decision to try to limit the ability of the Opposition. The Premier did it. I do not have the same number of staff as the Premier had when he was Leader of the Opposition and he knows it. It was the Premier's decision and there was no discussion.

Mr McGOWAN: What sort of request was received and what sort of arguments were put forward?

Dr GALLOP: The formula that applied prior to the election of the Labor Government was the same formula as was applied to the current Parliament. In other words, the National Party got its share and the Liberal Party got its share. There are two opposition parties.

[11.10 am]

Mr BARNETT: There is not; there is one Opposition and one Leader of the Opposition.

Dr GALLOP: I hate to inform the Leader of the Opposition, but there are two opposition parties, one of which is the National Party. He should take that up with the National Party.

Mr BARNETT: There is one Opposition. The Premier should look at the standing orders and the constitutional arrangements. If we had a coalition with the National Party the Premier would have an argument; but there is no coalition.

Mr D'ORAZIO: I refer to the second dot point under major initiatives for 2001-02 of output 3 at page 84. It refers to the establishment of a strategic management council to develop a state strategic plan. What will this initiative entail and what will it hope to achieve?

Dr GALLOP: The Machinery on Government Taskforce recommended that we bring government together more in Western Australia. Under the previous Government a sense of direction for public servants was not available. A very interesting survey was undertaken of government heads of department, which revealed that because of the way in which they received advice from the Government interpreting it was like reading tea leaves. In other words, no attempt was made to transmit a central and overall direction to government through the public sector. The task force recommended a strategic management council, chaired by the Premier and comprising the chief executive officers of the 23 departments of State. The council will play a key role in the development and implementation of a state strategic plan with indicators to demonstrate progress towards the agreed objectives. We are working on that now within the administrative side of government. This will be the first time that the Premier, as Minister for Public Sector Management, will meet on a structured and regular basis with the leading chief executives in the State to look at the overall public sector strategy for Western Australia. Work is being undertaken to prepare an agenda for the first meeting of the council. It is proposed that the agenda be pitched at the high strategic level with a strong linkage to budget and election commitments.

Mr BARNETT: Can you table the written questions and written answers?

Dr GALLOP: If the Leader of the Opposition was not so grumpy -

Mr BARNETT: Mushrooms are reading from typed questions inside little green folders. Why not just table them?

Dr GALLOP: Do you have typed questions?

Mr BARNETT: No.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Ballajura.

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Mr D'ORAZIO: Can I please have an answer to the question?

Mr BARNETT: The Premier should make sure he reads out the right question.

Ms QUIRK: I refer to dot point 3 under major initiatives for 2001-02 at page 84. Contrary to what the member for Hillarys says, I am interested in making sure that mature-age workers and youth are represented properly in the public sector. If he is not interested in listening to the answer, that is his problem. What will be involved in the strategies that the public sector is putting in place to retain mature-age workers and to increase youth representation in the public sector?

Dr GALLOP: As the member for Girrawheen knows only too well, there is a trend in our community for the ageing of our population. That is reflected in the ages of the working population. The Western Australian public sector work force is no exception to that. Research suggests that the number of full-time permanent employees 45 years or older as a proportion of full-time employment in the work force has increased from 21 per cent in 1988 to 48 per cent in 2001. This is a major issue. It has been taken up in the fields of education, health and the public sector generally.

Mr Barnett interjected.

Dr GALLOP: Does the Leader of the Opposition not think this is important?

Mr BARNETT: You are abusing the estimates process. I have not seen such an abuse of estimates in my 10 years in Parliament. It is an abuse to use written questions and written answers.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr BRADSHAW: Mr Chairman, my question -

Dr GALLOP: I have not finished answering the question.

Mr BRADSHAW: Hurry up.

Mr BARNETT: Table your written answer.

Mr BRADSHAW: I was just given the call.

The CHAIRMAN: Given the interjection, I thought the Opposition had finished listening and the Premier had finished the answer.

Dr GALLOP: I am sorry, but I had not finished. In order to assess the impact of this ageing on the public sector we must analyse the issue and provide solutions. We have undertaken a survey of employees' retirement intentions. If members opposite do not think the findings are interesting, that is their problem. I think they are very interesting, as does the member for Girrawheen. Around 26 per cent of employees aged 45 years or older intend to retire in the next five years while approximately 36 per cent intend to retire within the next five to 10 years. However, almost 60 per cent indicated that they intend to retain some form of paid employment after they turn 60. Of the work-related factors that influence retirement decisions, well over 95 per cent rated financial security as important, 77 per cent rated job stress and pressure as important and almost 60 per cent rated lack of interesting work as important. When asked to indicate their interest in a range of flexible work options, 78 per cent registered interest in contract casual employment, 68 per cent in reducing their hours and over 40 per cent in reducing their level of responsibility and/or working from home. Phased retirement is presently available, but not utilised by public sector agencies. One of the reasons is that the impact on employee superannuation is detrimental. Although workers over 50 years of age can revert to lower positions and maintain their higher superannuation contributions, this does not apply if they revert to part-time employment. Under the present principles of merit selection, a permanent officer cannot be transferred to a contract or part-time position unless the job was first cleared for redeployment. I am sure the Commissioner for Public Sector Standards would have something to say if that were allowed. Unless employees are over 55 years and working fewer than 10 hours a week, they cannot access their superannuation. It is a very important issue. It is a major issue for public sector management in Western Australia. We need to examine this issue. However, many of the solutions that we need for this issue require investigation. They impact on the Government Employees Superannuation Act and on the Public Sector Management Act. Investigation is being carried out within government into the impact of demographic changes and what must be done to address them. If members opposite believe that is not a very important question in public sector management, they are not up to date with what is occurring.

Ms QUIRK: The Premier addressed the ageing population. I am also concerned about representation of youth within the public sector.

Dr GALLOP: This is another important issue. One of the problems under the previous Government was that its approach to our public sector did not encourage people to join the public service as a career. The previous

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Government encouraged the view that employment in the public sector was a short-term function. It increased contracting out and outsourcing. The notion of a career in the public service was undermined by that Government's practices. As a result, not enough young people joined the public sector. At one end we must deal with ageing, and at the other end we must encourage young people to join the public sector. We must increase the number of public sector trainees. We will do that to the tune of 500 trainees over the next three and a half years. We will also encourage that in our regions. We are keen to get some of those traineeships into the south west of the State and, accordingly, we have initiated a program. I can report to the Parliament that as part of our commitment to new traineeships we intend to link it with improving access to and involvement of younger people in our State's public sector.

The member for Girrawheen will also be interested to know that we are trying to improve the equity position in our public sector. It is not representative enough of our broad community, and we are looking at ways to improve that.

At the top end with the ageing population, we must look at some of the changes to allow people to retire but play some role. At the other end, at which people join the public service, we must improve the number of traineeships and encourage young people to take up careers in the public sector and broaden the representative nature of the public sector, so that it can meet demand in a sensitive and culturally appropriate way.

[11.20 am]

Mr BRADSHAW: At page 79, under major achievements for 2000-01, is the statement that the North Asia Office managed a food and wine promotion in Tokyo 2001 that involved nine Western Australian exporters. Did the office do any follow-up to judge the success and worth of the promotion? I went to a supposed promotion of the South West Development Authority in 1989, which was totally useless and wasted taxpayers' money. Are these things followed up? Is an audit conducted to determine whether these things are done for the sake of doing them or whether they are successful and result in sales?

Dr GALLOP: The member says he had a bad experience, but I am not sure of the circumstances. However, I assure him that the promotion of Australian food and wine is an important strategic objective of government. It needs support. As result of the efforts of the former Agent General in London - for which I congratulate him - Western Australian wine and food producers have access to Selfridges in London. The former Premier went to London to launch that range. Unfortunately, I was unable to visit Selfridges during my recent trip to Britain; however, my wife went and looked at the Western Australian wine and food that is available. Selfridges sells 24 Western Australian wines. I am sure the former Legislative Council President and Agent General would be only too happy tell us about the consequences of that initiative. The significance of that work for our wine and food industry has been reported to me.

The North Asia Office managed the involvement of nine Western Australian exporters in a wine and food promotion in Tokyo in March 2001. With the Department of Commerce and Trade - now the Department of Industry and Technology - the North Asia Office was active in organising two booths for the participation of nine Western Australian food or wine exporters in the twenty-sixth international food and beverage exhibition, Foodex Japan 2001, held between 13 and 16 March at the Nippon Convention Centre in Makuhari. The food exhibition is held annually and is the year's major food and beverage promotional event. At the 2001 Foodex, 1 704 foreign companies presented products at 1 975 booths. Attendance records indicate that more than 94 000 buyers attended, including 7 200 from overseas. I expect the Department of Industry and Technology to follow up on that event to determine the consequences and value of that promotion. However, there is no doubt that these things must be done to establish contacts in the marketplace. Deals for Western Australian wine and food exports are signed up at these events. I assure the member that I expect the department to follow up to ensure that we are getting value for money. The member's cynicism is overplayed. These are important matters.

Mr BRADSHAW: The promotion in Hong Kong in 1989 was a total joke. The Premier is talking about a real food fair. The 1989 event was not, and much money was expended.

Mr MCGOWAN: In 1989? What year are we in?

Mr BRADSHAW: I do not care what year we are in.

Mrs EDWARDES: The member for Rockingham's party was in government at the time.

Mr D'ORAZIO: According to dot point 4 on page 86, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has taken a lead role in the implementation of collaborative case management in the Albany and Midland districts through the Strong Families pilot project. Can the Premier explain when that pilot will be completed, what success it has had and whether more funds will be allocated to it?

Dr GALLOP: When I was in Albany for a regional cabinet meeting, a new initiative of the Government -

Mr Colin Barnett; Dr Geoff Gallop; Chairman; Mr John Bradshaw; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr John Day

Mr BARNETT: The Premier should not be ridiculous. Successive Governments since that of Brian Burke's have had regional cabinet meetings.

Mr D'ORAZIO: Can I listen to the answer?

Mr BARNETT: It is a call for truth.

Mr D'ORAZIO: The Leader of the Opposition can make any comments at the end of the Premier's answer. I want to hear it first.

Dr GALLOP: As part of the new initiative of the Labor Government to have regular, planned, regional cabinet meetings, I visited Albany not long after the election. During that time I looked at the Strong Families pilot project.

Mr DAY: Is this the same as the Building Blocks program started by the previous Government?

Dr GALLOP: Absolutely. There is no question about that. It is a good program. We said that in our election policy.

Mr DAY: Have you changed the name of the project?

Dr GALLOP: No; Strong Families is one of the programs that came out of that broadly based initiative. Strong Families was due to conclude in November, but we have extended its funding to 30 June 2002 with an additional allocation of \$120 000 from the crime prevention funding we announced in the budget. It is a good initiative. Strong Families is a collaborative case management project that focuses on those families within the community who are experiencing difficulties and receiving assistance from more than one government agency. Previously, the departments of health, education, police, community development, indigenous affairs, housing and justice and, of course, the Commonwealth through Centrelink were all involved with these families. That resulted in buck-passing and flick passing, and created many problems. The idea of Strong Families is to allow a family to work through these problems and to coordinate the activities of the Government. We are extending the funding for that program. In providing the additional funding, the Government has committed to giving the project more time to properly evaluate its impact in Midland and Albany.

This budget has provided an additional \$698 000 for crime prevention programs like Strong Families. However, although Strong Families is funded with crime prevention moneys, the reduction of crime is only one potential benefit. The program works to improve the lives of children and their families through improved parenting and family functioning and better education and health. These are all contributing factors towards -

Mr BARNETT: When we were in government and held Estimates Committees, the Leader of the Opposition was given the courtesy of being able to ask questions. This Premier was never denied the opportunity of asking a question of the former Premier. This sort of waxing and waning never took place.

The CHAIRMAN: I am interested in the Premier's response.

Mr BARNETT: This is a contrived Estimates Committee. It is a disgrace to this Parliament.

Dr GALLOP: The Leader of the Opposition is wasting the time of this Parliament. That is fine; I will sit back and listen.

Mr BARNETT: This is an absolute waste of time. The Premier has contrived to make sure there is no accountability or proper questioning. His members read from green folders prepared by his department, and he has set up the process by which the committee is chaired. We are listening to set questions and set answers. I have never seen an abuse of Parliament to match this. This is absolutely contrived.

Dr GALLOP: This place has both an Opposition and a Government. Is the Leader of the Opposition aware of that? There are two sides to every story.

Mr BARNETT: The Premier, when Leader of the Opposition, was given every opportunity to question the former Premier. Year in and year out, he listened to question after question from the then Leader of the Opposition. This is a contrived process to protect the Premier. I know why he needs protection: he is an inept Premier and unable to stand up to scrutiny or accountability. Look at the padding at the back of the Chamber. It is a joke.

Mr D'ORAZIO: We are all members of Parliament, and we are all entitled to ask questions and receive answers. I want an answer to my question.

Mr BARNETT: The member for Ballajura has a typed script, and the Premier has a typed answer. This is a reading room. There is no accountability of estimates.

Mr Colin Barnett; Dr Geoff Gallop; Chairman; Mr John Bradshaw; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr John Day

Dr GALLOP: Strong Families is a good example of government agencies working in partnership with families to achieve real results for the community. We have done an interim evaluation, in which I am sure members opposite will be interested, as this program began under the previous Government. I tell the Parliament about one of the important expenditures of government and what the interim evaluation showed. The comments provided by families and workers clearly demonstrated the advantages of this approach. Information is being gathered about the specific elements of the model that work well and those components that need to be finetuned. The pilot is providing valuable information about the effectiveness of interagency collaboration and the potential it offers families, workers and agencies. The evaluation also provided information about the things that can stand in the way of developing effective interagency collaboration. This is very much a part of our commitment to tackle problems across government, to bring agencies together and to make life easier for those who must access government services. This initiative started with the previous Government, and the current Government is continuing it. It is increasing the amount of money it spends on it. That shows, as is the situation with an office of crime prevention, that when a good idea is put forward, the current Government will follow it up and put more money into it than did the previous Government.

[11.30 am]

Mr D'ORAZIO: I have a supplementary question. On occasions I have had to deal with people involved with this program, and they think it is wonderful. However, it is very narrow. If this is successful, is there any intention to expand it, not only to families in need but also across the board in other areas of government?

Dr GALLOP: The Government supports the general idea of working out the problems in the community and of bringing together government agencies to solve those problems. That is one reason that the Government will set targets for the State, and then work out how best to achieve those targets with interagency cooperation and cooperation between the government and non-government sectors.

Mr D'ORAZIO: I suggest to the Premier that I have a few in Ballajura, when the Government has more money.

The CHAIRMAN: For the benefit of members, I place on the record that the Chairmen of Estimates Committees met last week to discuss the procedures that would be followed during the course of the Estimates Committee hearings. It was agreed on a bipartisan basis that members would have equal status, and that our task was not to keep members to time and get them through all the divisions before the committee this morning or in any other allocated period, but to allow a distribution of questions from members on either side, as represented in the committee hearings. That was a bipartisan agreement.

Mr DAY: There is a convention as far as the Leader of the Opposition is concerned - whoever is the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr JOHNSON: The current Leader of the Opposition, in particular, always allowed the previous Leader of the Opposition to ask as many questions of the Premier as he wanted to ask.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not entering into a debate; I am just giving members the information about a bipartisan meeting held last week, so that they understand the sorts of agreements and discussions that are informing my management of this hearing. I am attempting to give as many calls to the Opposition as are requested, and to give that balance in terms of time and -

Mr JOHNSON: There is no balance here.

Mr BARNETT: This is not balanced.

The CHAIRMAN: I am keeping a record.

Mr D'ORAZIO: We have wasted about half an hour this morning on this nonsense, so let us get on with it.

The CHAIRMAN: The next question is to the member for Kingsley.

Mrs EDWARDES: I am happy to defer to the Leader of the Opposition if I get the call immediately after. Is that acceptable to the Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN: I am sorry, I am taking the call from members as they indicate they want it. Prior to this, I asked the Leader of the Opposition at various stages whether he wanted to go on the call list.

Mr BARNETT: Yes, and I have asked for the call about six times, and been ignored about six times.

The CHAIRMAN: I specifically asked the Leader of the Opposition whether he wanted to go onto the call list, and he indicated that he did not.

Mr BARNETT: Come on! I have been trying to get the call every 30 seconds. This is absolutely contrived.

Mr Colin Barnett; Dr Geoff Gallop; Chairman; Mr John Bradshaw; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr John Day

Mrs EDWARDES: If I could have the Premier's indulgence, I have two questions, but they are basically the same. I refer to salaries and allowances on page 95; and to plant, equipment and vehicles on page 96. I am referring to two questions on notice that have not been answered. The Premier came into government with a strong commitment to the highest standards of openness and accountability in government. He will be aware of the WA Inc royal commission's concerns about the habitual blocking of questions in Parliament. The Premier has not answered question on notice 237 relating to full-time equivalents. It has been answered by the Deputy Premier, the Attorney General, the Minister for Education, the Minister for the Environment, the Minister for Consumer and Employment Protection and the Minister for Police, yet the Premier has given me the answer that the information is not readily available, and provision of this information would require considerable research etc.

Dr GALLOP: What is the question about?

Mrs EDWARDES: The first question deals with FTEs that were under the Premier's control as at 9 February, and it has been answered by a large number of ministers. The other question relates to mobile phones. I cannot understand why ministers have refused to answer this question. It is pretty simple. The Attorney General has responded to it. If the Attorney General can respond, will the Premier please instruct his ministers not to block questions and to provide answers? If some ministers can do it, so can others.

Dr GALLOP: I will take that on board.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that a request for supplementary information?

Dr GALLOP: No, I will take it on board.

Mr JOHNSON: He said he would take it on board; he did not say he would do it.

Dr GALLOP: I will examine the circumstances behind the issues raised, and I assure the member I will do it in good spirit.

Mr BARNETT: I refer to output 8 relating to native title.

Dr GALLOP: I have a point of order. The native title issue will be dealt with by the Deputy Premier, who has responsibility for that item.

Mr BARNETT: It appears under division 3.

Dr GALLOP: No, the Deputy Premier has ministerial responsibility for native title.

Mr BARNETT: It is under division 3; I wish to ask questions about it.

The CHAIRMAN: If the Leader of the Opposition were to refer to the committee schedule for today, he would see that we are dealing with outputs 1 to 7 during the Premier's period.

Dr GALLOP: The Deputy Premier has responsibility for that area.

Mr BARNETT: Why does it appear under the Premier's agency?

Dr GALLOP: Because that is where it is administratively.

Mr BARNETT: Science does not appear there. Mr Chairman, I have another question. The Premier is such a smug, under-performing person.

Dr GALLOP: I am not smug. The Leader of the Opposition is stupid, angry and stubborn.

Mr JOHNSON: The Premier is incompetent. He cannot even answer questions from this side of the House.

Dr GALLOP: I am normal. The Leader of the Opposition is grumpy.

Mr JOHNSON: The Premier still cannot answer my questions.

Dr GALLOP: I will come back to them.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr BARNETT: I am battling to keep up with the sophistication of the Premier in this debate. I refer to output 4, management of policy. I have a simple question. Did staff from that area of policy in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet have the responsibility of preparing written questions and written answers for the Estimates Committee? If not, was that done elsewhere in the Premier's office, and what was the approximate cost of and involvement of staff in that exercise?

Dr GALLOP: No, what happens -

Mr BARNETT: No, it is a simple question.

Mr Colin Barnett; Dr Geoff Gallop; Chairman; Mr John Bradshaw; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr John Day

Dr GALLOP: I am answering it.

Mr BARNETT: Who prepared the green folders?

Dr GALLOP: What happens for all Estimates Committees is that information must be provided for every item in the budget so that I am in a position to answer questions.

Mr BARNETT: I asked whether the Premier's policy department or some other area within his control prepared written questions for members of the Government to ask him in the Estimates Committee. It is a simple question - yes or no.

Dr GALLOP: Of course, my friend, the Government tried -

Mr BARNETT: Is the answer yes?

Dr GALLOP: Let me answer the question. The government side in this debate wishes to take up particular issues that are important to it.

Mr BARNETT: Therefore, the Premier did have questions prepared for -

Dr GALLOP: Of course we did. Is the Leader of the Opposition saying the previous Government never did that?

Mr BARNETT: No, it did not. We never insulted this Parliament by having -

Dr GALLOP: Is the Leader of the Opposition saying that the issues that matter to the Government in the budget should not come up in this Parliament; therefore, we are not allowed to ask questions?

Mr BARNETT: I asked the Premier a simple question: did he have his staff prepare written questions for government members?

Dr GALLOP: Are we entitled to take up our issues?

Mr BARNETT: I asked the Premier whether he had his staff prepare written questions to be read out.

Dr GALLOP: Come on! Do not be ridiculous.

Mr BARNETT: It is a simple question. The Premier should answer it, yes or no. Did he? Is the answer yes?

Dr GALLOP: I have answered it.

Mr JOHNSON: The answer is yes.

Dr GALLOP: Of course we did, as indeed the previous Government did.

Mr BARNETT: No, we did not.

The CHAIRMAN: Did the Leader of the Opposition have a supplementary question?

Mr BARNETT: No. I have other questions, but I will wait my sixth turn.

The CHAIRMAN: I just gave the Leader of the Opposition the call.

Mr McGOWAN: As a preface to my question, I indicate that I have probably had a lot more experience asking questions in Estimates Committees than has the Leader of the Opposition. Last time, the opposition members sat here -

Mr BARNETT: I have a point of order. The member for Rockingham is not entitled to make a statement. If he wants to make a statement, he can do it at any time in Parliament. This is a time for questions to be asked in the Estimates Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sure he is getting to the point.

Mr BARNETT: No, he is making no attempt, and you know it.

Mr McGOWAN: Further to the point of order, I indicate that government members are entitled to ask questions of ministers in Estimates Committees, the same as everybody else. What happened last time was that government backbenchers asked questions, and they were taken in turn, in good spirit. I remember being here on a number of occasions when the Leader of the Opposition was the Minister for Education, and the current Deputy Leader of the Opposition took alternate questions. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to ask more questions, he should tell his members not to ask any, and he will be able to ask every opposition question. That is up to him.

Mr JOHNSON: Yes, but our ministers' written responses did not go on for hours.

Dr GALLOP: We have written responses on every issue.

Mr Colin Barnett; Dr Geoff Gallop; Chairman; Mr John Bradshaw; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr John Day

Mr JOHNSON: We know, and they are all dorothy dixers. They are in green folders.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr MCGOWAN: My question is to the Premier. It relates to the federal affairs area of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, which appears on page 84. I am interested in what issues are currently afoot between the Commonwealth and the State, and how the State is dealing with them, particularly the intergovernmental agreement on salinity that is currently being negotiated between the State and the Commonwealth. I think that was the subject of a question without notice from the Leader of the Opposition, so I am probably asking one of his questions for him. Therefore, I am giving the Leader of the Opposition a bit of help.

[11.40 am]

Dr GALLOP: This is an important issue, because relations between the State Government and the federal Government are of crucial importance to the future of our nation. Many issues are involved. The first issue is greenhouse gas emissions. Western Australia's activity in this area revolves around the State's seeking to contribute its fair share to reducing global greenhouse emissions, but in a way that does not compromise the international competitiveness of its industry. The State has essentially three spheres of activity: participating in ongoing international negotiations with regard to the Kyoto protocol; contributing to the national greenhouse strategy; and developing a Western Australian greenhouse strategy. That is an important area. The State Government has a responsibility to pursue that matter, through the federal affairs unit of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, and with the environmental agencies within government.

Natural resources management is another issue. At the Council of Australian Governments meeting on 3 November 2000, the council endorsed the Commonwealth's proposal for a national action plan as the basis for developing an intergovernmental agreement to tackle salinity and deteriorating water quality. The IGA will provide the foundation for developing bilateral agreements between each State and the Commonwealth. Current activity has been focused on negotiating the IGA, with the major areas of contention for Western Australia being the Commonwealth's insistence on tripartite agreements and funding arrangements that require matching new funding from the State and direct "block funding" to regional bodies. The State would like to participate in that. However, the provision of direct funding to these regional bodies, which do not have the status that a State has, can represent a problem.

Another area at issue is food regulation. On 3 October 2000, the heads of government signed an intergovernmental agreement to deliver a more streamlined, efficient and nationally consistent food regulatory system for Australia that will enhance public health and safety. The IGA commits the parties to using their best endeavours to submit the relevant legislation to their respective Parliaments within 12 months. Current activity in Western Australia is, therefore, focused on tailoring the model legislation for implementation in Western Australia. Related activity is focused on participating in the new ministerial council and the establishment of its subcommittees; and the replacement of the Australia New Zealand Food Authority by Food Standards Australia New Zealand and the establishment of its new stakeholder consultative mechanisms.

Another issue is gene technology. The Government has committed to participate in a national legislation-based gene technology regulatory system that began on 3 January 2001.

Mr DAY: This is a good agriculture question, for which there is another division.

Dr GALLOP: This is federal affairs. The member is wasting time with his interjection.

It establishes commonwealth and state legislation to replace a voluntary guidelines-based process. Activity in Western Australia has been focused on the implementation of Western Australian legislation and policies, and participation in the national system via a new ministerial council and the associated new commonwealth Office of the Gene Technology Regulator. We have also agreed to develop performance indicators with regard to the 2002 "Report on Government Services", which will enable a comparison between Governments of the efficiency and effectiveness of their service delivery. Federal affairs coordinates the annual Western Australian Government input into that report, which reports on commonwealth-state government service provision in a wide range of areas, including health, education, justice, community services and housing. Federal affairs liaises with the relevant government agencies within Western Australia in preparing our submission.

The final issue is gambling. On 3 November 2000, the Council of Australian Governments agreed to a range of measures to address problem gambling in Australia, including the development of a national strategic framework and a ministerial council. Activity in Western Australia has been focused on responding to a number of national inquiries, and ensuring that Western Australia's unique position in limiting electronic gaming machines is not compromised by any national approach to that question. Gambling will be a key issue in Western Australia. The Government has restricted access to electronic gaming, and it intends to preserve that policy. We want to ensure that that national inquiry does not compromise the State's interests.

Mr Colin Barnett; Dr Geoff Gallop; Chairman; Mr John Bradshaw; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr John Day

Mr McGOWAN: I am interested in salinity, because I would like to undertake some research. Can the Premier provide as supplementary information details about the arrangements that are in place between the Commonwealth and the State with regard to salinity, and also about the way in which the issue of poker machines may affect revenues to the State from the Commonwealth?

Dr GALLOP: The Government will not introduce poker machines; and that will make it difficult for our budget. The other States have become addicted to and are getting a lot of revenue from poker machines. I heard the Premier of Victoria, Steve Bracks, say the other day that without that revenue from poker machines, the State's budget would be under stress. We do not want that. We do not want the social problems that result from the introduction of poker machines. We do not want the shift of resources to those activities. Nevertheless, it does put pressure on our budget in comparison with other States. With regard to salinity, which I know is of great interest to the Leader of the Opposition, the Government has sent a letter to the commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Senator Robert Hill; and he invited us to do that. Senator Hill met with the Minister for the Environment and Heritage. Attached to that correspondence was a letter of support for the State's position from the Natural Resource Management Regional Chairs group. Therefore, we have the support of those people in our arguments with the Commonwealth. The issues that the Government outlined in its letter were the inclusion of the Swan as a priority region, because currently it is not included; the method of funding to the regions; the recognition of ongoing commitment and equity for Western Australia; the type of partnership agreement suitable for Western Australia; and the suitability of the proposed national standards and targets. As yet, the State Government has received no response from the Commonwealth, but we will continue to press this point so that the State can get a satisfactory outcome.

Mr DAY: I refer the Premier to the total appropriation for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet on page 75 and to the fact that during the election campaign, the Premier promised to halve the growth in funding for the department, thereby saving \$324 000 in the current financial year, and making a total saving of \$4.405 million over four years. However, the reality is that page 134 of the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook* indicates that the amount of money that has been saved is zero for both the current financial year and for total savings. What is the reason for that?

Dr GALLOP: That is simple. In opposition, we outlined a program of savings measures to achieve our targets. That was one savings measure that we got wrong, because in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet's budget in the forward years, money had been put in for general cost escalation and wage increases. That was money that was needed for the normal processes of government. That money was not available to us, as we have indicated in the budget papers. Of course, that does not detract from the fact that this Government has brought about a significant achievement in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The recurrent budget for 2001-02 is \$75.638 million, which compares with the estimated actual for 2000-01 of \$84.69 million, a decrease of \$9.052 million, or a 10.7 per cent reduction in the budget of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. We have achieved that through many different measures. Is the member interested in knowing some of the measures that the Government has taken?

Mr DAY: I want to know exactly why the Government is not saving anything, when it promised that it would. In reality, what seemed to be a wonderful election promise is not based on any solid foundation.

Dr GALLOP: The Government got it wrong, and we have admitted that to the people. However, we have managed to achieve extra savings in other areas as a result of our election commitments, and those savings have enabled us to fund all the expenditure promises that we have made.

Mr BRADSHAW: One of the major achievements for 2000-01 on page 79 is the graffiti program coordinated expansion of volunteer graffiti reporting and removal initiatives. How did the Government achieve that expansion of volunteer graffiti reporting? Does the Government get involved in the removal of graffiti? I notice from one of the other pages that the cost of removing graffiti is around \$33 per item.

[11.50 am]

The CHAIRMAN: What is the reference for that?

Mr BRADSHAW: Unfortunately, I took some of the information from the CD and it has different page numbers.

Dr GALLOP: I am pleased the member has asked this question. I have copious prepared notes on this topic because it is very important. Just as I have notes dealing with questions asked by government members, I have notes dealing with questions that might be asked by members generally.

The graffiti program coordinated expansion of volunteer reporting and removal initiative -

Mr BARNETT: Are you going to read out this one too?

Mr Colin Barnett; Dr Geoff Gallop; Chairman; Mr John Bradshaw; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr John Day

Dr GALLOP: This is a response to a Liberal Party question. Does the Leader of the Opposition want a detailed answer?

Mr BARNETT: It is a joke.

Several members interjected.

Mr BARNETT: I understand that, sunshine. I wonder whether the Premier knows anything about his department.

The CHAIRMAN: We are all interested in the answer.

Dr GALLOP: In consultation with other organisations, the program implemented national standards for graffiti removal and established the graffiti share network. This network comprises public and private sector organisations with the objective of providing a forum for the exchange of information and ideas. An improved relationship with regard to graffiti has developed between the Government and the private sector over the past 12 months. That is the essence of the member's question. A set of nationally accredited standards has been approved for processes associated with the removal of graffiti. A graffiti-removal course is now available to both public and private sector organisations and more than 20 operators have been accredited. It is a good program, initiated by the former Government, and this Government is continuing it. It has in excess of 1 500 volunteers, which is significant. A \$10 000 grant was secured from the international year of volunteers secretariat to improve the coordination of volunteer services. This grant will finance training in graffiti-removal techniques and a presentation skills course. From 2001-02, the graffiti program will be part of output 4 and will be linked to Safer WA and the Office of Crime Prevention.

We need a zero-tolerance approach to graffiti. The best example I can provide relates to a general practice in Victoria Park that I know well. Over the years, the receptionist has noticed graffiti appearing on the fence outside the practice. Whenever that happens, she immediately cleans it up; overnight graffiti is removed first thing in the morning. She has defeated the graffiti artists by her persistence and they no longer bother defacing the fence. That is what these programs are all about - immediate removal. The point of graffiti is that it is visible for some time. If it is removed quickly with the assistance of local government and volunteers, the graffitiists are gradually worn down. I thank the member for the question; it is an important issue and this Government intends to maintain its priority.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr D'ORAZIO: I thought the protocol is was one question from each side.

The CHAIRMAN: There is a balance, and I am maintaining it using a call sheet.

Mr BARNETT: I refer to page 93 and the figure for "Electorate Offices Equipment Upgrade", which I assume relates to computer equipment and fitouts of electorate offices. Reference is made to allocations of \$200 000 for 2001-02, an additional \$800 000 for 2001-02 and \$1 million for electorate office fitouts. Can the Premier, either now or by supplementary information, provide details about which electorate offices are to receive expenditure under each category?

Dr GALLOP: That cannot be done because the program has not been set at office level. Different offices have different needs from time to time.

Mr BARNETT: The computer program would have been set.

Dr GALLOP: We will have a look at that. Exactly what information does the leader want?

Mr BARNETT: I want to know which electorate offices will receive computer or other equipment upgrades this financial year.

Dr GALLOP: That varies according to members' needs. We are happy to look into that, but it may not be fully determined because needs assessments are ongoing. There will be a general upgrade of all electorate office software throughout the State at the beginning of the new year.

Mr D'ORAZIO: That is wonderful news.

Mr BARNETT: Will supplementary information be provided? I do not expect it now.

Dr GALLOP: We will provide the available details as supplementary information.

Ms QUIRK: I refer to page 91, on which reference is made to an antiracism strategy. What programs are included in that strategy?

Mr Colin Barnett; Dr Geoff Gallop; Chairman; Mr John Bradshaw; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr John D'Orazio; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr John Day

Dr GALLOP: Again, this is an inherited program. The antiracism strategy needs further work. Its aim is to reduce the incidence of overt racial prejudice and antagonism in our community. It is part of the overall objective to build a multicultural society underpinned by mutual respect. We are still working on the precise details of the program, but much of the preliminary work has been done. We have allocated funds for it in the budget. Obviously, this process will involve feedback from community organisations and community consultation to make the program relevant. I know the member has confronted specific issues in her area, and I congratulate her for the work she has done to overcome the hurtful divisions that cause great trauma and suffering in our community. The overall aim of the antiracism program is to build better harmony and mutual respect in our community. Funding has been allocated and the general framework is in place. The precise details, types of consultation and processes are yet to be finalised and approved.

Ms QUIRK: Are any moves afoot to address instances of racism that might occur as result of recent events in the United States?

Mr JOHNSON: He has cut the budget by 20 per cent.

Dr GALLOP: I have not addressed that issue yet.

Mr JOHNSON: You have not answered my question:

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Hillarys has the next call.

Dr GALLOP: As members know, I have been very disturbed about attacks on Muslim people, schools and religious facilities in Western Australia. That is unacceptable. I took the opportunity in question time last week to outline my horror about that sort of behaviour. I have encouraged all victims of such incidents to report them to the Police Service, which will follow up the issues and ensure those responsible are brought to justice. The Office of Multicultural Interests is constantly monitoring the situation. I am sure all members will agree that we must take a strong stand against displays of racism towards minority groups, particularly those following Islam. They are part of our community and they contribute to it. Like the rest of us, they are horrified about the attacks that occurred in America last week.

The antiracism strategy is designed to achieve an understanding and awareness of where racism occurs and whether it is systematic or institutionalised. It is also designed to consider the legal and administrative issues associated with it, the media and the role it plays in the community, and the local models for dealing with race relations, which is close to the heart of the member for Girrawheen. Members might be interested to know that the member for Girrawheen represents a multicultural electorate, and she has actively engaged in her community to bring people together and ensure harmony in the community. The Government also wants to consider the specific indigenous issues that are at stake, and the safety, security and victim support that is available. As a result of the consultative processes that will be set up, a symposium will be held towards the middle of 2002; and regions will be incorporated in that process through a video conference. This will be a systematic strategy that will involve the community and will explore the major issues. We hope that the Opposition will also be part of that process.

[12 noon]

Mr JOHNSON: Perhaps the Premier will answer the question I have asked about 10 times; that is, why has he cut the budget for multicultural issues, under output 7, by 20 per cent? That is not the question I want to ask, but it is very important -

Dr GALLOP: It is a very important question, but it is misleading. Firstly, funds were allocated in last year's budget for the constitutional centenary celebrations, and the member should know that more than anyone else. That was a one-off allocation. Secondly, a certain amount of money was passed forward each year within the budget under the previous Government that was not included in the forward estimates for long-term planning. Unfortunately, when we came to government we found this phenomenon in many areas. There was no long-term planning, and we had to put the Office of Multicultural Interests on a proper, sustainable basis for the future. There have been some cutbacks in that area. They will not impact upon our ability to deliver mainstream programs for the multicultural community, to develop a proper antiracism strategy and to finalise the online community programs. However, as in all other government agencies, we believe it is possible to bring about some reductions to fund the general improvements that we want in government. In this area, two large, one-off expenditures had a significant impact on the budget - the centenary celebrations and the money which was handed over for a couple of years by the previous Government but which was not built into any forward estimates. Therefore, it was a one-off payment and, once it was spent, it was gone.

Mr JOHNSON: I know that once money is spent, it is gone. However, the Premier gave a commitment on this before the election. I know that a lot of agencies have had some funding cuts, but the Premier cannot deny that

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funding to multicultural issues has been cut by 20 per cent. That is hypocritical, especially in view of current events -

Dr GALLOP: I neglected to mention one important issue that has not been taken into account in the member's question. I have separated funding for citizenship from multicultural issues. Therefore, the citizenship allocation of \$477 000 has gone to the citizenship unit within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The figures the member is reading do not give a full representation of what is happening on the ground in citizenship and multicultural interests.

Mr JOHNSON: I understand perfectly that the citizenship section is in a different area. However, I am specifically talking about multicultural issues -

Dr GALLOP: That used to be in that section.

Mr JOHNSON: Of course it did, but the Premier has separated that out -

Dr GALLOP: That is why the budget shows such a big decrease.

Mr JOHNSON: The Treasurer said that we were comparing apples with apples and like with like in those areas. The budget allocation of \$2.7 million in 2000-01 was for multicultural issues; it was not in the citizenship area.

Dr GALLOP: There has been a modest reduction in the amount available for the Office of Multicultural Interests to do its job. It does not represent in any way, shape or form a problem in delivering services. However, the member is not taking into account the one-off centenary celebrations, the money that was not incorporated by the previous Government in long-term planning and the shift of the citizenship area to a unit in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Mr JOHNSON: I have taken all those things into account.

Dr GALLOP: Why is the member still saying there has been a 20 per cent cut?

Mr JOHNSON: As the Premier is a Rhodes scholar, he can tell me whether the figures on page 89 of the *Budget Statements* for output 7 show a 20 per cent reduction in funding for multicultural issues.

Dr GALLOP: I have just told the member -

Mr JOHNSON: I am fully aware of the Centenary of Federation funding and that citizenship funding is now separate from multicultural issues -

Dr GALLOP: It is not separate.

Mr JOHNSON: It is separate from the multicultural issues amounts.

Dr GALLOP: Obviously the member is not listening, because he does not want to listen.

Mr JOHNSON: I am listening, but the Premier is not answering the question factually. I guess it is the Premier's budget!

Dr GALLOP: I have answered and the member does not like the answer; that is the trouble.

Mr JOHNSON: It is not a factual answer. I was going to ask a follow-up question to the previous question, which I think the Premier will agree he did not answer. Will the Premier provide a detailed explanation for the rise in expenditure on consumable supplies, as shown at page 95 in the statement of financial performance, from last year's total of \$3.271 million to \$8.765 million this year, which is an increase of 168 per cent?

Dr GALLOP: This is one of those technical issues. If the member looks above that figure he will see the amount for supplies and services was reduced from \$21.913 million to \$17.33 million. That figure needs to be considered alongside the figure for consumable supplies, which increased from \$3.271 million to \$8.765 million. Those figures are basically the same when they are balanced out.

Mr JOHNSON: Why have they been put on different lines in this year's budget?

Dr GALLOP: I will seek advice on that.

Mr JOHNSON: The budget papers are confusing enough this year.

Dr GALLOP: They are the best ever.

Mr JOHNSON: The Premier is bound to say that. However, it is not so easy to compare last year's figures with this year's figures because of certain issues. It is even more confusing when two line items this year were one line item last year, and are on different lines in this year's budget.

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Dr GALLOP: As the member knows, some accounting methods in this year's budget are as a result of the development of accrual accounting. The previous Government introduced accrual accounting, so there is nothing partisan about it.

Mr JOHNSON: I accept that.

Dr GALLOP: I am happy to give the precise reasons that has happened. However, the bottom line is the same, so there is no great issue.

Mr JOHNSON: Is the Premier prepared to provide that as supplementary information?

Dr GALLOP: Absolutely.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Andrews): Will the Premier clarify which supplementary information he will provide?

Dr GALLOP: I will provide supplementary information under "Expenses from ordinary activities" on page 95, relating to the supplies and services and consumable supplies items.

Mr D'ORAZIO: I refer to the sixth dot point of the major achievements for 2001-02 on page 86, which relates to the Indian Ocean Territories program. What actions have been taken over the proposed space station on Christmas Island?

Dr GALLOP: This is an important development. The Commonwealth has announced that a space station will be built on Christmas Island. Christmas Island is a commonwealth Territory and the Commonwealth Government holds responsibility for it. We have raised an issue about our oil and gas industry and the important infrastructure associated with it. Certain flight paths and drop zones will have the potential to cause damage to major Western Australian assets and infrastructure, particularly in the oil and gas industry. The Government has been instrumental in ensuring that the State's interests are protected as far as possible through state government input into the Commonwealth's space legislation and regulations. The Commonwealth is keen to build the space station, which is a good thing, because it will provide new jobs and opportunities and will be a great addition to Christmas Island. However, Western Australia has an oil and gas industry with a lot of infrastructure. We do not want any items dropping on the North West Shelf gas rigs or whatever. Therefore, we are lobbying the Commonwealth Government to make sure that the interests of our State are properly protected in the process. This matter has been of concern to industry, and we have been talking to the Commonwealth to make sure that we do not have a problem resulting from that space launching pad at Christmas Island.

[12.10 pm]

Mr BARNETT: I refer to page 95, "Advertising and promotion", Department of the Premier and Cabinet. For 1999-2000 there is a figure of \$22 000, for 2000-01 there is actual expenditure of \$40 000, for 2001-02 there is a figure of \$30 000, and for 2002-03 we find a 700 per cent increase in the allocation for advertising and promotion. Why is there a 700 per cent increase; and, specifically, what items of promotion and advertising are planned for 2002-03? The figure of \$219 000 is specific and it is a 700 per cent increase.

Dr GALLOP: This could be one of those issues that needs analysis, but I can assure the Leader of the Opposition that as a result of the decisions of our Government we will be reducing the travel, advertising and consultancy budget of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet by \$625 000 this year.

Mr BARNETT: I am asking specifically about advertising and promotion, not travel or consultants.

Dr GALLOP: I will take that question on notice and provide supplementary information. I am happy to do that, but I am telling the Leader of the Opposition that as a result of decisions that we took, which were different from the decisions made by the coalition, we will reduce in 2001-02 travel, advertising and consultancy by \$625 000. The \$625 000 is split up in three ways: advertising \$113 700, interstate and overseas travel \$231 000 and consultancy \$280 300. In 2000-01 we have already reduced those budgets by \$209 000. As a result of the Labor Government coming to power, from February to June we have saved \$209 000 for the people of Western Australia that would have been spent under the previous Government, which \$209 000 will go back into core services for the Government.

Mr BARNETT: My supplementary question is: I specifically ask for an explanation.

Dr GALLOP: The member will get it.

Mr BARNETT: I will ask the question again, because I am not interested in the Premier's public relations nonsense that he is coming out with now. I ask specifically why from 2001-02 he proposed to increase advertising and promotion - not travel, not consultants - from \$30 000 to \$219 999, and I would like a detailed answer.

Dr GALLOP: I suspect this is another one of those accounting issues and I will get back to the member on it.

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Mr BARNETT: It is a 700 per cent variation without an explanatory note.

Dr GALLOP: I can assure the Leader of the Opposition that we have made a decision to cut down on advertising and promotion.

Mr BARNETT: It is a 700 per cent increase, Premier.

Dr GALLOP: The member should wait until he gets the facts before he gets on his high horse.

Mr BARNETT: I am asking a straight question.

Dr GALLOP: And you are getting a straight answer.

Mr BARNETT: No, I am not. The Premier has not answered my question. A 700 per cent increase is not a marginal variation: it is a seven-fold increase. The Premier does not have any idea and none of his advisers appear to have any idea.

Dr GALLOP: The member should get off his high horse and we will give him the information.

Mr MCGOWAN: My question relates to page 84, output 4, federal affairs, in particular to defence issues. The Premier has a particular interest in defence issues as they relate to the State, which is refreshing. What is the status of the ongoing negotiations between the State and the Commonwealth about defence matters and, in particular, the maintenance contracts for the Collins-class submarines based at HMAS *Stirling* in my electorate of Rockingham? What is the State doing vis-à-vis this issue with the Commonwealth? Are there any other defence issues about which the Premier would like to inform the committee?

Mr BARNETT: I will answer the question for the Premier. It will be like his effort on Skywest: he will put out a press release and have his photo taken.

Dr GALLOP: Is this the Opposition that wants accountability in government?

The CHAIRMAN (Mr Andrews): Members!

Dr GALLOP: This is an opposition that simply wants to fill empty space with empty rhetoric. Let us go on with the question that has been asked.

The CHAIRMAN: I call members to order. Can the member for Rockingham indicate a line to which the question refers?

Mr MCGOWAN: My question specifically relates to page 84, output 4, federal affairs. Federal affairs encompasses all the relations between the State and the Commonwealth.

Dr GALLOP: This is a very important matter for Western Australia. We have been most concerned at the approach taken by the Commonwealth Government, which is basically that it is yet to be convinced that the major refits of the Collins-class submarines should go anywhere but South Australia. However, because the Commonwealth Government has left open the question we will still go knocking on its door, because until this matter is finally wrapped up and delivered we will not give up arguing on behalf of Western Australian interests. We intend to continue to press the Commonwealth on this matter. I raised this matter with the Prime Minister at the Council of Australian Governments meeting and when he came over to Western Australia for the Liberal Party conference, and we have written to both the Prime Minister and the Minister for Defence on these matters. The one thing we can now do - and the Prime Minister agreed with this - is to take a high-level mission to Canberra to demonstrate and substantiate our marine industry capacity. This high-level delegation will be led by the Minister for State Development, which is scheduled to meet with the commonwealth Minister for Defence on 26 and 27 September 2001; that is, this week. I am pleased to say that the delegation will include the member for Rockingham and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier -

Mr BARNETT: Did the member have to ask the question because he did not know he was on the junket to Canberra?

The CHAIRMAN: Members, it is probably worth pointing out that we have four more divisions to complete in approximately 45 minutes.

Dr GALLOP: The delegation will also include Mr Lyndon Rowe, Chief Executive of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia; Mr Phill Brown, General Manager of Tenix Shipbuilding WA; Mr Norm McKenna of Babcock Defence Systems; and Dr Paul Schapper, Acting Director General, Department of Industry and Technology. This is a very important initiative and it will enable us to indicate that the submarines should have their major overhauls where they are based.

Mr JOHNSON: Does the Premier not have to convince his federal leader as well?

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Dr GALLOP: It is true that there is a problem at commonwealth level. It does not matter who is in power, we will press this issue with great vigour and keep pushing it on behalf of Western Australia. When our federal leader is Prime Minister at the end of the year, we will go knocking on his door as well.

Mr JOHNSON: He is not doing too well at the moment.

Dr GALLOP: Do not count your chickens, my friend. This is an important issue and we will continue to press it. We believe that the submarines should have their major refits where they are based. First, the submarines and the staff are based in Western Australia; secondly, we are developing capacity from the maintenance work that we are doing; and, thirdly, we have great marine industry capacity in Western Australia which is developing and is world competitive. We believe this is an important issue and we should take it up on behalf of Western Australia, and we intend to do so.

Mr BRADSHAW: My question relates to page 86, major initiatives for 2001-02, where it states that an Office of Crime Prevention and the department will support a review of crime prevention activities across the State and the development of a state crime prevention strategy. Does this mean that the Premier has no confidence in the Police Service? Does the Police Service have a policy office; and, if so, does this mean duplication?

Dr GALLOP: No. The member is missing the point about crime prevention.

Mr BRADSHAW: I thought the Police Service was out there to stop crime.

[12.20 pm]

Dr GALLOP: The member is a little behind the times. The role of the Office of Crime Prevention is much broader than simply policing issues. The Office of Crime Prevention and its establishment has the full support of the Commissioner of Police and the Police Service, because it is an important complement to what they do. The role of the police in our community is to catch and successfully prosecute criminals. Police increasingly recognise, however, that in order to successfully tackle crime in the community, a broader approach is required, and crime prevention should be part of that. The police now assist communities to develop the Neighbourhood Watch program, to improve citizens' knowledge of and access to safety devices that can be used to protect their homes, and work with the community to bring about solutions. I will give an example of this. A program is run by Mission Australia next door to the central police post at the Perth railway station. The police had a problem with many young people on the streets, at risk through abuse of alcohol or drugs, or behaving in a disorderly way for any reason. Police could take those people into the lock-ups and process them, but Mission Australia has introduced a program under which it can gather these at-risk people from the streets, take them in, feed them, and find out their circumstances. They may need to be taken home or referred to another agency, but the program removes from the criminal justice system people who should not necessarily be there, but who do need assistance. This is a part of what the Government calls crime prevention, because those youngsters could commit crimes while they are at risk on the streets. They are taken off the streets, but they are not put through the criminal justice system. That is a good example of cooperation between the police and a non-government agency.

Crime prevention more generally concerns issues like lighting and urban design. My congratulations go to the City of Gosnells, which has led the way in improving community safety with city planning measures. Mayor Pat Morris has been a leader in this area. Crime prevention also involves isolating and dealing with the causes of crime. The Government is strongly supportive of non-government agencies that try to tackle the problems in some sections of the community that lead people to lose any sense of contact with mainstream society, and start on a life of crime. Police and citizens organisations, church-based organisations and local community groups are among these. One crime prevention initiative I announced earlier this year has been going for a couple of years, with my support, in Karawara. The program takes some of the youngsters at Kent Street High School who do not fit into the mainstream education system. They go to school each day and are able to develop their social skills, basic literacy and numeracy so that they can get out of the cycle of crime. Other measures operate in indigenous communities, helping youngsters who are losing their way and putting them back into contact with their traditional cultures. During the election campaign I went to Roebourne, where the local police have developed a program for young Aboriginal people to go out with their elders, learn their traditions and culture and develop a sense of identity and self-worth. Crime prevention involves more than the police. It involves the Department of Health, the Department of Education, the Department of Justice and non-government organisations. The Office of Crime Prevention must deal with all those organisations. It is responsible to me as the Premier, through a subcommittee of the Cabinet that oversees its activities. The Government is proactive in this area. Crime issues should not be seen only as police issues. They are more than that, and the police and a range of other departments and agencies now recognise that.

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Ms QUIRK: I refer the Premier to page 100, under both "Details of the administered transaction expenses" and "Details of the administered transactions revenue". Under both those headings, provision is made for funding for a royal commission into the Police Service. Is there an ongoing commitment to hold that royal commission at some stage?

Dr GALLOP: Yes, and the member will note that a budget allocation has been made of \$5 million in 2001-02 and \$10 million in 2002-03. This is the \$15 million commitment given in the last election. I said earlier this year that a number of matters needed to be settled in Western Australia. One of those matters was the finance broking scandal, a problem we inherited from the previous Government, and which had not been properly investigated. If the matter of accountability is raised, a few questions could be asked about why the previous Government did not look into that matter. This is a good question, and has been raised and answered by the community. The Government has established the Temby royal commission. All members should note the quality of the Temby royal commission, compared with that of the inquiry set up by the previous Government. There is no comparison, because the Government gave Temby the terms of reference and the resources he needed to do a proper job. We look forward to his conclusions.

The Government believes a police royal commission would be better dealt with following the Temby royal commission. It is working on the terms of reference and the manner in which the inquiry will be undertaken. There are issues related to the Anti-Corruption Commission, which is another budget item coming up soon. The ACC has important ongoing work to do, and the Government is very conscious of that, because the ACC has been dealing with some of the matters a police royal commission would consider. A relationship between the ACC and the royal commission will need to be developed, because of the resources and information the ACC has. The \$15 million has been put aside, as promised in the election, and the terms of reference and the administrative processes that will enable the Government to hold a proper inquiry into the matters that were never properly analysed or solved by the previous Government have been established.

Mr JOHNSON: On the second line from the bottom of page 97, an amount appears as "Net cash transferred to/from other agencies". Which agencies received the \$14.617 million funding listed under that item, and for what purpose were the funds used by those agencies?

Dr GALLOP: This may be an example of an accounting method. To give the member a proper answer to the question, I ask if he agrees that I come back with supplementary information?

Mr JOHNSON: It is more than an accounting method; it is money that has been transferred. I am more than happy to receive supplementary information.

Dr GALLOP: I suspect one of the issues here is - dare I mention it - a word that begins with the letter "b" and ends with the letter "r". I will whisper it for the member - the belltower. Does the member for Hillarys remember that?

Mr JOHNSON: The Premier may say it out loud - the Opposition is proud of the belltower, and so are the thousands of people who have visited it.

Dr GALLOP: It is a pity that the thousands of people all visited when they had to pay nothing, and now there is a big problem.

Mr JOHNSON: The Premier may be misleading Parliament by saying it all has to do with the belltower. We are talking here about \$14.6 million that has been transferred.

Dr GALLOP: It could be related to the belltower. The management of that project has been passed to another agency.

Mr JOHNSON: Is the Premier saying "it could be" or "it is"?

Dr GALLOP: It could be.

Mr JOHNSON: The Premier should not then make a statement that it all has to do with the belltower. I would prefer to receive a factual answer by way of supplementary information.

Dr GALLOP: I will provide the member with a fully factual answer. I apologise, if he did not like my reference to the belltower, but I will come back with the information on that item.

Mr JOHNSON: What I did not like was the Premier evading the question.

Dr GALLOP: This Opposition does not want to have a little dialogue on some of the issues.

Mr JOHNSON: I am more than happy to have dialogue any time the Premier likes, but this is budget estimates, and we have listened to a diatribe all morning, made up of the questions that the Premier has provided to

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government members, and the answers that have been typed out by his staff. Dorothy Dix is alive and well in this estimates committee. This is the worst performance I have seen from a Premier during the past eight years. Richard Court would answer questions mainly from the Opposition. He did not have to read out all his answers.

[12.30 pm]

Dr GALLOP: What homework did the member do for these estimates? When did the member start working on them?

Mr JOHNSON: Over the weekend.

Dr GALLOP: That is a lot of preparation!

Mr MCGOWAN: He put the budget papers in the car and did not get them out at home.

Mr JOHNSON: Does the member think I did the work in the boot of my car? This hearing is deteriorating at your behest, Premier, into some stupid nonsense. It is unbecoming of a Premier to deal with it in this way.

Dr GALLOP: You asked me, my friend, about the questions I answered.

Several members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Dr GALLOP: I exposed the fact that the member is a lazy opposition spokesman. He did nothing about the budget papers until the weekend.

Mr JOHNSON: We only got them the week before.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the member for Hillarys have a supplementary question?

Mr JOHNSON: I am waiting for an answer to the last question. The Premier is good at evading questions, and has been all morning.

Dr GALLOP: The transfer of assets liabilities of \$14.094 million reflects the capitalised work in progress of the Barrack Square redevelopment being transferred from controlled to administered as per the Auditor General's recommendation in 1999-2000.

Mr JOHNSON: Is the Premier sure that is the amount to which I am referring? I said \$14 617 000. I would prefer the answer by way of supplementary information so that I can see what the truth is.

Dr GALLOP: We will get the supplementary information.

Mr JOHNSON: When did government members start looking up their questions? Was it when they were given their green folders this morning? All these green folders came from Department of the Premier and Cabinet and were made up by the Premier's staff. He should be ashamed of himself having to give his backbenchers these dorothy dixers.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr D'ORAZIO: On page 86, one of the major initiatives is that a citizens and civics unit will be created to develop citizens and civics policy, strategy and initiatives. What is involved and what will be the outcomes?

Dr GALLOP: The previous Government created the Ministry of Citizenship and Multicultural Interests. There were two problems with it. The first was that the two objectives, although related, were not truly compatible with one another. Multicultural interests have a citizenship content but citizenship has a much broader purview. For example, there is the Constitutional Centre in Parliament Place, the good work done in this Parliament involving students and the good work in the community generally encouraging young people to learn about how the political system works. That is a much broader agenda than how to incorporate our concept of citizenship into a multicultural society.

We decided it was much better to separate citizenship and develop a whole-of-government approach to citizenship, and to have an office of multicultural interests that focuses attention on multicultural issues, the on-line communities project, anti-racism strategy, Harmony Day and so on. The reason for the separation was that we wanted a broader view of citizenship. We went into the election campaign saying that we would try some new methods of involving people in government. One of them has been the use of citizens' juries. The Community Drug Summit involved many stakeholders who could bring advice to government separate from the normal channels of public administration. The unit on citizens and civic policy in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet will encourage citizenship and a civic approach to our community and the way it operates. It will advise me on how the Government can implement strategies through departments in partnership with non-

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government agencies. There is already a partnership through the Celebrate WA program, which plays a big role in this area. It has citizen of the year awards and promotes Western Australia's historical benchmark dates.

The creation of one department caused a confusion of roles. We thought it was better to separate the functions and have a whole-of-government approach to citizenship through the unit in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. It means that multicultural interests can focus directly on those issues that need addressing. The member can see some of the results of the strategy already. For example, the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure announced yesterday the results of a major consultation on road trains. I do not want to be provocative, but today's Opposition would not have had the imagination to do that when in government.

Mr BARNETT: I would not promote the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure as a leading light of the Government.

Dr GALLOP: Does the Leader of the Opposition not applaud what she has done by getting people together?

Mr BARNETT: In the same way as she did over the railway decision, where there was no consultation at all? I have two questions. I am sick of hearing the Premier prattle on about how good he is.

Dr GALLOP: The Leader of the Opposition must learn that there are two sides to every story.

Mr BARNETT: This is an estimates committee hearing, not a forum for the Premier to tell us how outstanding he thinks he is.

On page 85, footnote (a) indicates that the full-time equivalents employed in this output during 2000-01 were 50 and are estimated to be 60 for 2001-02. Why is there to be a 20 per cent increase in the size of the policy unit in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet?

Dr GALLOP: The estimated number for 2001-02 should be reduced to 50 following the creation of output No 8 on native title. That means there is a mistake in the budget papers.

Mr BARNETT: What is the correct figure for 2001-02?

Dr GALLOP: It will be 50.

Mr BARNETT: How many term-of-government employees are there in the policy unit, and can he identify those persons and their level?

Dr GALLOP: I will provide that as supplementary information.

Mr McGOWAN: On page 93, the capital works program refers to the Barrack Square redevelopment. The estimated total cost of the redevelopment is \$20 081 000, yet no money is provided for it in this year's budget. It appears that \$6 million is not to be spent in that area. Why is the Government not spending that extra \$6 million on the Barrack Square redevelopment?

Dr GALLOP: We have reprioritised government expenditure in Western Australia towards those areas we consider important. As the budget shows, the areas are health, education and training, and police. There will be more police, and a significant increase in education and training through apprenticeships, literacy and numeracy programs, and behavioural management programs. We must make a commitment to the health budget to ensure it can meet the demands placed on it. It is the Government's view that the relationship with, and focus on, the central business district by the previous Government was admirable in a general sense, but it ignored the needs of people in the suburbs. This Government represents the suburbs and the people in them.

[12.40 pm]

Mr BARNETT: It certainly does not represent the country.

Dr GALLOP: There are a lot of suburbs in the country.

Mr McGOWAN: I have a supplementary question. Does that mean there is a \$6 million saving on what the former Government was going to spend on the Barrack Square redevelopment?

Dr GALLOP: The amount spent was \$14 million. That figure is compared to the estimated expenditure. That is finished; it is done. The Government will not fund the project further.

Mr McGOWAN: The \$6 million?

Dr GALLOP: No, that was last year. That was the contrast between what was estimated and what was spent.

Mr BARNETT: I refer to the second output, "Management of matters of State". More specifically, I refer to ministerial offices and the office of the Leader of the Opposition.

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Dr GALLOP: Which page?

Mr BARNETT: Page 76. I ask the Premier to provide a detailed budget for the Leader of the Opposition for 2000-01, including the number of officers employed and their level, in a comparative table with that for the Leader of the Opposition for 2001-02. I will accept supplementary information later, if necessary. The Premier claims that funding for opposition parties is equivalent, but the reality is that there is only one Opposition, and that is the Liberal Party. There is no coalition. The Premier took it upon himself, without any discussion at all, to take resources from the Opposition and allocate them to the National Party. If the analysis is done, the Premier will find that the Opposition cannot employ a chief of staff at the same level as the now Premier had. The Opposition cannot employ a media officer at the same level that the Premier had when he was in opposition. I want a strict comparison between the budget the Premier had when he was Leader of the Opposition and the one I have as Leader of the Opposition. I want it to include the levels of public servants and the number of staff employed.

Dr GALLOP: That is fairly straightforward.

Mr BARNETT: I want it to include the Legislative Council. Under the Labor Party in opposition, the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council had four staff; Hon Norman Moore has two staff. That is the difference.

Dr GALLOP: The Leader of the Opposition has to come to grips with the fact that there are two opposition parties.

Mr BARNETT: There are not. If there were two opposition parties, they would be in coalition. There is no coalition and there will be no coalition.

Dr GALLOP: The Leader of the Opposition should argue with the member for Avon.

Mr BARNETT: It is the Premier's decision. He made it unilaterally and without any courtesy. I demand a strict comparison of the budget and level of officers employed in my office and when the Premier was the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr McGOWAN: On that point -

Mr BARNETT: Sorry, pal, this does not concern you.

Dr GALLOP: This is their idea of accountability and open government - "You shut up, pal!"

Mr BARNETT: The member is not a minister and never will be; he is a backbencher. This is about the Westminster system and the budget the Premier had as Leader of the Opposition and what the Liberal Party has in opposition. I want it broken down by level of officer and function. I want the number of vehicles included as well.

Mr McGOWAN: I want to ask the Premier for further information.

Mr BARNETT: I have not finished my question.

The CHAIRMAN: The Leader of the Opposition has asked a question. The Premier should respond.

Mr BARNETT: Will the information be provided now or as supplementary information?

Dr GALLOP: I will provide information on the number of officers engaged.

Mr BARNETT: No. I want a comparison between the budget for the Leader of the Opposition for 2000-01 and the Leader of the Opposition for 2001-02. If the Premier wants to include additional information for staff allocated to the National Party, that is his choice.

Dr GALLOP: I find this incredible.

Mr BARNETT: I want a comparison between the two Leaders of the Opposition's offices.

Mr McGOWAN: Do not worry; he will not have to worry about it for long.

Mr BARNETT: Listen, smart alec, sit there and shut up! Let the Premier answer the question.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, members!

Dr GALLOP: I refer the Leader of the Opposition to the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal.

Mr BARNETT: No, I want a strict comparison of the levels of officers, budgets, salaries, vehicles and other expenditure. I want a strict comparison of the two offices. It is straightforward.

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Mr McGOWAN: If the Liberal Party were split in two -

Mr BARNETT: Point of order! This is a serious question about the Westminster system and I would prefer that wonder boy stays quiet.

The CHAIRMAN: The Leader of the Opposition jumped in before I could respond. The Premier should answer the question.

Dr GALLOP: I will provide the information but I also want to indicate -

Mr BARNETT: That is enough. Thank you.

Dr GALLOP: I have not finished my answer.

Mr BARNETT: We have all heard how wonderful you are.

The CHAIRMAN: Premier, the Leader of the Opposition has asked the question.

Dr GALLOP: I remind him that, under the previous Government, 210 people were employed in ministerial offices. Does the Leader of the Opposition know how many we have now? There are 161.

Mr BARNETT: How many did the Premier have?

Dr GALLOP: One never has enough. If the Leader of the Opposition adopts that attitude, he will never go anywhere in politics.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you, members. I will pass to the next question.

Mr BRADSHAW: Page 85 of the *Budget Statements* refers to "Major Achievements for 2000-01". The Premier has established a cabinet standing committee on regional policy. Will more consideration be given to country towns and regional centres, as has happened during the 18 years I have been in Parliament? Places like Bunbury and Mandurah have received more focus than towns like Waroona, Pinjarra, Harvey and Donnybrook. Those towns are struggling these days because of a change in attitude by people about where they want to live. We have to make those towns more attractive places in which to live. More focus has to be given to those sorts of towns.

Dr GALLOP: The member has raised an interesting point. One of the things the Government wants to do with its regional cabinet visits -

Mr BRADSHAW: Cabinet already visits Bunbury and Albany.

Dr GALLOP: Regional cabinet visits have to be made to smaller towns. The Government is very conscious of that. It could be achieved by breaking up the Cabinet into smaller parts so that more areas can be covered. It is a big logistical exercise to take the Cabinet to a community. Regional cabinet visits are more suited to larger regional centres. Nevertheless, there are problems with smaller towns. I know that the towns that the member represents argue that Bunbury and Mandurah get a lot of attention and other places do not. The Government is conscious of the concerns raised by the member and is looking at ways of dealing with them.

From time to time there may be a full cabinet meeting in a smaller centre. The logistics would not be easy, but the Cabinet could be broken into smaller groups and get feedback from smaller communities. As a matter of government policy, this is an issue. Over the years, the main street program has been a good one for smaller communities. It has helped them lift their presence. A lot of local governments that represent such towns have improved them through economic strategies; they have been very good at that. The question posed is a good one; the Government has been thinking about it in connection with regional cabinet visits. Hopefully, some of the smaller communities can be slotted into the overall process.

Mr BRADSHAW: Regarding policy, will the Government start looking at moving development commissions out of major centres like Mandurah, Bunbury and Albany and relocating them to towns such as Donnybrook, Denmark and Collie? The commissions are centralised in regional centres and all they think about is the regional centres.

Dr GALLOP: That is a tougher issue.

Mr BRADSHAW: I know it is.

Dr GALLOP: It is hard enough to get government officers to move from Perth, let alone to get them to move from Bunbury to Collie. As the member knows only too well, there have been some recent examples in Collie.

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Mr BRADSHAW: And what Brian Burke tried to do in Bunbury. He tried to move some of the public service down there, but the construction project did not go ahead.

Dr GALLOP: There are major issues here. The Lawrence Government moved the Department of Land Administration to Midland. It has been successful, but it was not easy. I have sympathy and support for what the member is saying, but translating it into practice is not so easy. The Government will take it into account with its regional cabinet visits and ensure that it visits more than just the regional centres.

[12.50 pm]

Mr D'ORAZIO: One of the major initiatives for 2001-02 referred to on page 84 of the *Budget Statements* indicates that the Premier's awards program will be expanded. How will that be expanded? Which other categories will be incorporated in that program?

Dr GALLOP: The Premier's awards program is a very good program. It recognises excellence in public sector delivery. It is focused on the creativity of public sector agencies that relate to their communities and on delivery of new services. The new categories for this year will include social or community development, economic development, sustainable development, services to regional and remote clients, and innovation and management improvement. The categories relate to the four areas of policy priority of the Government: social, economic, environmental and regional. It is intended that the category of innovation will promote creativity in the public sector, and is aligned with the Government's innovation policy. Changes have been made to the Premier's awards program because this Government wants the program to fit in with its overall objectives for government.